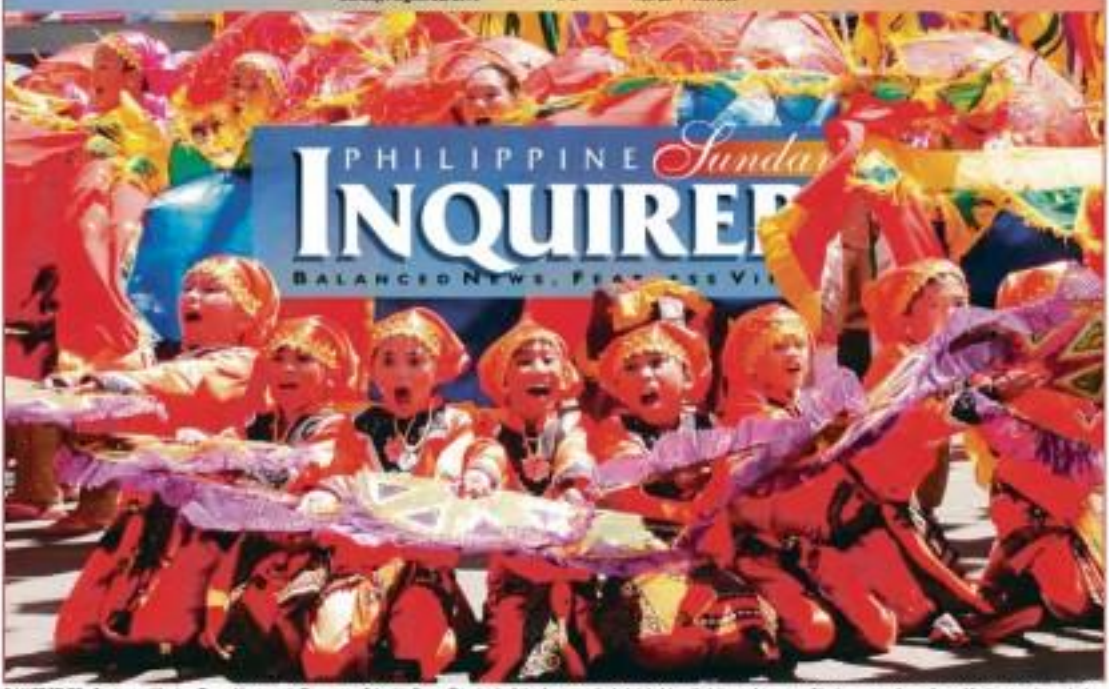
Sunday, August 22, 2010 ★★ Vol. 25 / No. 255

PHILIPPINE Sunday INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS



DANCE FEVER Students of Kapitan Tomas Monteverde Elementary School in Davao City give it all they've got at the Indak-Indak sa Kadalanan. As many as 21 other groups from all over Mindanao took part in the street dancing competition that is a highlight of the annual Kadayawan Festival.

Ping told: Come home

With passport canceled, Ping's world is getting smaller

By Nikko Dizon and Christian V. Esguerra

WITH NO passport to use to hop from one country to another, the world has gotten smaller for Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson.

The fugitive senator, who is wanted in connection with the November 2000 murder of public relations man Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver Emmanuel Corbito, has no recourse but to turn himself in, Justice Secretary Leila de Lima said yesterday.

"He has much lesser options now or none at all except to surrender and face the charges. It's time to face the music, recognize the authority of a competent court trying the case, and prove his innocence, if at all," De Lima said in a text message to the Inquirer when asked to comment on the cancellation of Lacson's regular and diplomatic passports.

The Department of Foreign Affairs canceled the senator's passports in compliance with an order from a Manila court and requests made by the Department of Justice.

De Lima had assured Lacson a fair prosecution of the Dacer-Corbito double murder case.

Lacson managed to flee the country on Jan. 5 to avoid what he termed as persecution by the administration of then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Malacañang yesterday called on him to return to the country to prove his claim.

PING/A6

Institute of Integrity: Nene pursues lifelong dream

By Winston A. Marbella
Contributor

IN HIS QUEST for the presidency, President Aquino captured the hearts of the people with these words: "There are no poor people where there are no corrupt public officials."

In his first address to Congress, he expressed a national yearning: "Now we can dream again."

Aquilino Pimentel Jr. has begun to make one dream come true.

It is hard to imagine Pimentel in retirement. After four decades, the gentle senator from Mindanao is ending his career in public service. Now in private life, he lives for a consuming passion—making a lifelong dream of honest public officials come true.

INSTITUTE/A6

Missing bank exec had taste for high life, 'new shiny things'

By Alcuin Papa and Jeannette I. Andrade

THE BANK OFFICIAL reported to have made off with at least P300 million in deposits of mostly Chinese-Filipino clients is said to enjoy the high life.

Francis Bryan Ang, who has been relieved of his post as assistant vice president of Citibank's Citigold wealth management unit, is "addicted to new and shiny things," according to a schoolmate at Xavier School.

"Maybe he got a taste of the high life, liked it, but found he couldn't afford it. So this is what he did," said the schoolmate who asked not to be named for security reasons.

MISSING/A6

Quest for justice continues for Ninoy Aquino

By Norman Bordadora

THE QUEST for justice for the martyred opposition leader Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., who was killed by an assassin's bullet 27 years ago, will continue, according to his son, President Aquino.

But Mr. Aquino said his administration continues to be focused on giving justice to all Filipinos, particularly those who have suffered social injustice.

"I am being asked whether I still intend to pursue justice for my father. We will do what we can, although there are those that say it is already too late because more than 25 years have passed since the assassination," Mr. Aquino said in a brief message to family members, friends and supporters at the Mass celebrated by Fr. Catalino Arevalo at the Manila Memorial Park yesterday.

Ninoy, the fiercest rival of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos, was shot

QUEST/A6

IN MEMORIAM President Aquino says prayers at the grave of his father, former Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., who was assassinated on Aug. 21, 1983, at the airport that now bears his name. REUTERS/STR

THEN AND NOW Sarah Balabagan has come a long way from the girl who returned to her motherland after evading the death penalty in UAE.

Sarah Balabagan: The next chapter

By Monica Feria
Global Pinoy Editor

SARAH BALABAGAN is working overseas again and looks forward to one day returning to the Middle East.

More than 15 years ago, Sarah made headlines when, as an underaged Muslim girl from Maguindanao illegally recruited to work in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), she overturned a death sentence for stabbing and killing an employer who attempted to rape her. The international outcry and the passionate appeals by the Philippine government got her a lighter sentence of two years in jail and 100 lashes, but only after the payment of P1 million in blood money.

SARAH/A9

Taxman goes after bet who spent P200

By Maurice Malanes
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—It could only happen in the Philippines.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) wants to collect P312.67 from a

TAXMAN/A9

• **Bb. Pilipinas** International dies in car-bus collision NEWS / A16 • **Archers, Eagles** face off anew • Cobra Ironman gets going in CamSur SPORTS • **Israel, Palestinians** to talk peace anew WORLD / A19 • **Why did** they move the 'Spoliarium'? • A classroom in a 19th-century 'bahay-na-bato' SUNDAY LIFESTYLE • **Ironclad:** Suiting up for the Ironman Triathlon • Ana 'Hurricane' Julaton takes Filipino boxing fans by storm • From TV host to House Rep: Cutie goes to Congress • For NU's center Mbe, Google fastest way from West Africa to RP SIM • **Saving classic** Filipino films in a time of climate change ENTERTAINMENT

WEATHER FORECAST

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Baguio	Mostly Cloudy	Cebu	Mostly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Mostly Cloudy	Iloilo	Mostly Cloudy
Legaspi	Mostly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Mostly Cloudy
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2D: 3 17
5D: 10 19
6D: 14 29
SUBTOTAL: P5
3D: 0 2 6
4D: 2 7 7
6D: 5 6 9
JACKPOT: P110,286,705.60

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P5,677,561.60
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NPA kills 9 cops, village exec

NINE POLICEMEN, among them two ranking officers, and a barangay official were killed in two separate incidents in Samar and Surigao del Norte on Saturday.

In Catarman, Northern Samar, communist insurgents ambushed and killed eight policemen who were responding to reports that the rebels had murdered a village official in his home, police said.

The barangay official was identified as retired Army Brgd. Rolando de Dato, a councilman of barangay Inobolo, about eight km from the town proper.

The eight policemen, among them the deputy police chief of Catarman, were in a patrol car en route to De Dato's village when they hit a land mine believed to have been planted by members of the rebel New People's Army (NPA), said Senior Supt. Brigido Dinag, police provincial director, in a phone interview yesterday.

Killed were Senior Insp. Nicasio Lerupe San Antonio, deputy chief of police in Catarman, and SPO2 Anito Tugaon Jalin, SPO2 Joaquin Mallorilao Fuentes, PO2 Melchor Ureño Robinsones, PO2 Mincial Escalleralgo Velarde, PO2 Rodel Mayuga Baleg, PO1 Edgar Calzados Calzadoy and PO1 Ariel Obinga Saludario.

The group left the police station at around 7 a.m. to check on the report of De Guzn's mother at dawn that day. Their vehicle hit the land mine at around 8 a.m. as they were traversing a road in Sitio Rimbo, a few meters from the village proper, the police report said.

Senior Supt. Hermie Lore, deputy director of the Philippine National Police in Eastern Visayas, in another phone interview, said the information he received from the Catarman police was that the policemen were shot at close range after their vehicle hit the land mine.

"They were shot dead one by one," he told the Inquirer in Cebuano.

Aside from their service firearms, the rebels also took the personal belongings of the policemen's "like wallets and even their uniforms," added Senior Supt. Manuel Gabille, information officer of the police regional headquarters, in a separate interview in Tacloban City.

The Samar-based villages of Catarman have been identified by the Army's 803rd Brigade as one of the free areas in Eastern Visayas where the presence of the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army (CPP-NPA) is still felt.

Unay said some 40 rebels were believed to be involved in the ambush.

He said the rebels operating in Samar had been targeting police-manned checkpoints.

In July, a young policeman, PO1 Ramay Enriquez, was killed in broad daylight by two suspected rebel hitmen inside a restaurant in Catarman, Unay said.

Private firms the police provincial headquarters and soldiers from the 20th Infantry Battalion based in Calbiga, City have been distributed as patrol forcebels.

Chief Supt. Arnold Revilla, the regional police chief, said the reinforcements were flown by helicopter into the hamlet because of concerns there may be more unexploded bombs on the village road.

Checkpoints have also been set up at several points in Catarman and its neighboring town.

Lianga police chief slain

In a related development, the police chief of Lianga, Surigao del Norte, was killed in an encounter with communist rebels Saturday afternoon.

Chief Supt. Leo Cañagunan, Caraga police chief, said investigators of the Lianga police—led by Chief Insp. Christopher Illo—were returning from the upland village of Danao by foot after conducting an inventory of seized logs there when they chanced upon a group of NPA rebels.

Cañagunan said an encounter ensued, resulting to the death of Illo.

"Illo, who was leading the 40-man team of police, army and government operatives, was hit in the head and died shortly after he was brought to a hospital," Cañagunan said.

He said Illo was the lone government fatality.

Government troopers believed the rebel side also suffered casualties but were not sure of the numbers, he added. Reports from Rachel Arnaiz, Joey A. Gabieta and Gleto Aragon, Inquirer Visayas; Jeanelle Cañagsol, Inquirer Mindanao; and AFP

Thailand ready to help attain Mindanao peace

By Charlie C. Señase
Inquirer Mindanao

COTABATO CITY—Thailand said it was ready to join international efforts to resolve the long-running Muslim insurgency in Mindanao.

Bangkok is very much interested to help in whatever way possible, especially in the peace talks with the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), according to Thai Ambassador Rukhanat Panjhana Na Ayudhaya who met on Thursday with officials of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

"We are here to promote peace and help poor communities in the Philippines develop, especially here (in the ARMM) where development is impeded by the long history of security problems," Rukhanat told the officials led by ARMM acting Gov. Anasrodin Adiong.

Rukhanat said Thailand wanted to help in the talks as part of its mission "to strengthen bilateral ties and good relations with our neighbors in Southeast Asia."

He said the Thai government would be willing to undertake a comprehensive study of the economic potential of Mindanao and of ways to establish a peaceful climate through a built-in security mechanism "to ensure that all the inhabitants are secure and enjoying a better life."

Thai security adviser Somkiat Boonchoo said a stable security situation remains the key to economic growth.

"Frequent fighting or occasional violence would certainly affect economic activity and the people, mostly innocent civilians, suffer," he said.

Thailand, whose three southernmost provinces have a majority Malay Muslim population, is itself battling an ethnic separatist insurgency. Muslims make up about five percent of Thailand's population.

Adiong said Thailand's offer to help in the talks and the development of Muslim communities was most welcome.

"We are overwhelmed by the Thai government's concern to improve the lives of our people. And we hope their efforts to resume stalemate peace in Mindanao would soon be realized," Adiong said.

It was learned that Rukhanat and his party had also met with MILF leaders and members of the Malaysian advisory team of the International Monitoring Team (IMT).

The IMT monitors the implementation of the agreement between the government and the MILF relating to ceasefire, rehabilitation and development and civilian protection. It is composed of the governments of Malaysia, Brunei, Japan and Libya. Qatar, Indonesia and Norway are also slated to join the IMT.

Pinoy seamen rescued off NZ

SIX Filipino crew members have been rescued after their korean-flagged fishing vessel sank in waters near New Zealand, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said yesterday.

A report from the Philippine Embassy in New Zealand identified the six as Jessie Perez, Alexander, Edwin Gonzales, Amel Arnedo, Robin Bola and a certain Gumpoven.

They were among the 45 seafarers aboard the Oyang 70, which sank 640 kilometers east of Dunedin in South Island, New Zealand. The ship's crew included Koreans, Indonesian, Chinese and Filipino nationals.

Three crew members were said to have died when the ship sank. Three others are missing and presumed dead because of the freezing water temperatures.

The DFA clarified that none of the dead or missing were Filipinos based on the report by the Bureau Coordinator (OMA) New Zealand (BCONZ).

The surviving crew members were rescued by the Amistad Atlantic. They were expected to arrive in Lyttelton, South Island, early Saturday.

According to John Seward, BCONZ operations manager, the rescued seafarers were safe and in good condition.

The embassy said it had also talked with Andy Smith, the operations manager of the fishing company that operates the Amistad Atlantic. The latter said he had been in touch with the Oyang 70 shipowner Dior Samoa.

Smith said Daewon would be chartering a bus to take the crewmembers to a hotel. Cynthia D. Balana

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Singson bail was HK$2M

By Michael Lim Ubac

ILOCOS SUR Rep. Ronald Singson posted bail of HK$2 million (P11.5 million) and not HK$1 million (P5.7 million) as earlier reported. Only then was he released to the custody of two Hong Kong residents.

In a phone interview yesterday, Marilyn Ilao, Solicitor, Federico Quintin said there was a taxonomic mistake on the amount of the bond.

The judge was not using a micro-phone when he announced the bond amount in open court on Thursday morning. The confusion was sorted out later in the day when Singson and his counsel turned back to court to ask for more time to submit his travel documents.

The magistrate repeated his ruling and it became clear that the bond was HK$1 million plus HK$1,000,000 each from the two Hong Kong businessmen of Singson.

"We weren't allowed to see the [court] documents as they are private," said Quintin, vice chair of the House of Representatives justice committee, who flew to Hong Kong on the House's official observer.

On Thursday, Principal Magistrate Ernest Lit granted Singson's application for bail after two guarantors, Hong Kong residents Jacob Wong and Aaron Shek, had agreed to secure a cash surety bond.

A highly placed source in the House told the Inquirer that the initial HK$1 million was shelled out by the Singson family while the rest was paid by Wong and Shek.

Singson was arrested at Clark Luzon International Airport on tarmac on March on July 11 for possession of cocaine and two cabinet of diazepam (a sedative marketed as Valium), according to court records.

A recommendation by Hong Kong authorities showed that Singson had 6.7 grams of cocaine, not 20.1 grams, as earlier reported, according to Quintin.

This prompted the court to grant Singson's motion for bail and amend the charge from drug trafficking to illegal possession.

He was ordered by the court to surrender his travel documents and report once a day to a specified police station near Wong's house.

He is also expected to show up on time for his trial at the district court on Sept. 7.

Even if Singson is convicted by the Hong Kong court on drug charges, he will not be automatically stripped of his congressional duties and expelled from the House.

"The House has to vote on what sanctions to impose on Singson, most likely first at the level of the ethics committee and then at the plenary level," said Rep. Sonny Angara, a lawyer and third-term congressman of Aurora, when contacted by phone.

Much like an impeachment proceeding, which is first tackled by the justice committee before the committee would have to vote ahead of the plenary, said Angara, explaining that the members of the ethics committee would have to build a case, hear it and then pass judgment on Singson.

Any judgment can be adopted, or reversed, by the whole House in plenary session, he added.

Quintin echoed Angara's position.

"Speaking from a legal standpoint and based on experience we have in the Committee on Justice, it's the[sic] territory because the conviction—assuming he gets convicted—takes place outside the room [of] he said.

The best course of action is to initiate an ethics proceeding in the House, Quintin added.

"It will have to be decided by the ethics panel under the rules," said Eastern Samar Rep. Ben Evardone, when asked about the fate of Singson.

PHOTO shows Bro. Mike Velarde speaking before followers from a stage adorned with a streamer [top] of the Buhay party-list group, proof a critic maintains, of the link of the religious leader to the group.

Ouster of party-list group linked to Bro. Mike pushed

By Nikko Dizon

A CRITIC of the Buhay Hayaang Yumisong (Buhay) party-list group stemmed with complaint Mariano "Bro. Mike" Velarde has filed a petition for unilateral blanket to oust[sic] against the group and the Commission on Elections (Comelec) before the Supreme Court, citing the poll body's alleged grave abuse of discretion when it proclaimed Buhay as a winning party-list group in the May 2010 elections.

Bernardo Layug, who describes himself as a "taxpayer/ rights advocate," a veteran narrator with private radio station dwNR, and a member of a community, asked the high court to suspend the implementation of the resolution of the Comelec's second division dismissing his petition against Buhay party-list, the Comelec's subsequent proclamation of Buhay, and to order the Buhay nominees to "cease and desist" from performing the functions of party-list representatives.

Layug said that the Comelec's second division failed to issue him or his lawyers a notice of promulgation of his complaint. When he finally secured a copy and filed a motion he recommended that the Comelec en banc on July 30 proclaimed Buhay as a winner in the May elections entitled to two seats in the House of Representatives.

Before the May elections, Layug asked the Comelec to disqualify Buhay, arguing that it represented a religious group, in violation of the Party-List Law.

He also said that Velarde had been the boss of Buhay as shown, on its posters, per the "spiritual leader" of the El Shaddai charismatic group was a billionaire, thus the party-list group certainly did not represent a marginalized sector.

The Buhay party-list represented sixth nominee in Congress are Velarde's son, Representative Michael Velarde Jr., and William Irwin Tieng.

Bel Sobles, Buhay chair, dismissed Layug's petition before the Supreme Court.

"Maybe you should ask him his agenda (for filing the petition) because Buhay party-list has been in Congress since the last three elections," Bobles told the Inquirer in a text message.

He also said that Layug should have filed the petition before the House of Representatives Electoral Tribunal, which he said was the "proper venue" for such protests.

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Ping told: Come home

From page A1

"Senator Lacson has always said that the charges against him are political, politically motivated. If there's a need to look if what he is saying has any basis," Secretary Teddy Casiño of the Palace communications development and strategic planning office said over government radio station dzRB.

"But that is happen, Senator Lacson should return," Casiño said.

Undocumented alien

De Lima was hopeful that the cancellation of Lacson's passports would be "an effective way to prevent him from, or outbase, if indeed he's out of the country."

"With a canceled passport, he's now deemed an undocumented alien, a status which certainly restricts his movement. And doubtless would be free to accept him and subject him to deportation proceedings. If found in a country with an extradition treaty with [the Philippines], he can be to extradited," De Lima said.

She added: "I know that the general public keeps a very keen interest and watchful eye at the developments of this case. The sentiment cannot thus continue to evade the workings of the legal process."

De Lima also said she had regularly been directing the National Bureau of Investigation to look for Lacson and implement the outstanding warrant for his arrest.

The warrant was issued by the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 16 on July 7.

"NBI assures no letup in its search," she said.

'Best recourse'

Senate Majority Leader Vicente Sotto III also said his fugitive colleague should return to the country and surrender to authorities.

"The best recourse for him at this point it is face the charges and clear his name," Sotto told the broadcasting giant. "That's the best option."

Sotto made it clear that he and the other senators were subscribing to the dictum that Lacson, like any other accused, "is innocent until proven guilty."

He refuted the justice secretary's assertion that the cancellation of Lacson's passport meant that the fugitive senator was now "an illegal alien" in whatever foreign country he was hiding.

Sotto also said that as he, some of the senators had heard from Lacson.

Last week, Sen. Francis Escudero told reporters that the chamber would not provide protection for Lacson because of the gravity of the crime of which he is accused.

"The immunity against arrest [for members of Congress] is only for crimes the penalty of which is below six years," Escudero pointed out.

He cited the case of Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, who is still in detention in connection with the Oakwood Mutiny of 2003. With a report from Norman Bordadora

Institute of Integrity: Nene ...

From page A1

PENSIVE: At PRIVATE LIFE: How do you teach ethics?

Behavioral scientists have long debated whether or not ethics can be taught. The answer seems to lie in the universe. If it cannot be taught, how does it persist/survive?

As Pimentel tells the story, the idea was brought to him by friends and supporters two years ago as an advocacy to pursue after his retirement as a senator of the realm. They encouraged him to continue his life's work in civic-nonsense integrity in public service. As most things in life happen, one thing led to another and, before anyone knew it, the dream had begun to take shape.

The University of Makati engineered that. Pimentel put up an institute for good governance in his name. Its purpose? an outer crusade—that it not carry his name. But he was eventually convinced to accept the name. Pimentel Institute of Leadership and Governance (PILG) in the university's Center for Good Governance.

The mission

In mid-July, Pimentel invited a small group of believers to rebut their reactions to the broad strokes of his dream institute. The group proposed that the institute launch a campaign that involves the smallest unit of government: down to the grassroots...the sanggunian barangay or barangay council.

"It working session," Pimentel called it in a typically understated sense. But it was clear as he studied the plan that he had spent a good amount of time thinking about it. More to the point, it was clear to everyone that Pimentel was committed to making the dream come true ... even if it was the last thing he would do in his life.

The institute has scheduled a series of two-day seminars beginning in September for members of the sanggunian barangay. They are coming classes all over the country to learn about principles governing public service.

Pimentel will begin by clarifying the mission: Why are we here—in this world, in this country, in this center?

"I suggest that the main reason we are here is to contribute to a mission: to help build a just and liveable world where people, no matter their differences in race, creed, status in life or sex, will help and trust one another as fellow human beings," Pimentel said.

He told the group that we are in this country to that "by choice, fate or divine design, the Philippines is the starting point of our journey toward becoming fully human, that state of life where we treat and relate to all peoples, especially in our country, as one brothers and sister Filipinos. I would like to add that we become truly human when we believe and act so that no one lives or dies only for himself."

Making a difference

He said the reason for being in the center named after him is to "try to discover why we want to go into public service, transform the world we live in and make a difference in people's lives."

"In the context of our country's democratic institutions, those in public office serve the people, not to elevate but to public servants with the people's consent which they express through free and honest elections.

"By serving the people, the public servants deliver political, social and economic benefits to the body politic and advance the people's liberties and human rights," Pimentel said.

What this means, he said, is that those who go into public service "do so not to line [their] pockets with money or fear in resources but to become truly the servants of the people, not their masters."

An equally important purpose of why people go into public service may be to fulfill themselves in the service to others, he said.

"Serving into public service via the electoral process means getting involved in politics, usually partisan politics in a democratic setting.

"Politics in its pristine sense simply means defining policies for the good of the people, then planning by government officials with the participation of the people to deliver their basic needs," said Pimentel.

Institutional corruption

Recalling his experience as mayor of Cagayan de Oro City, Pimentel called corruption "a major obstacle that lies in the way of those who wish to serve the public faithfully." He cited two examples.

"A few days after he was elected, Pimentel was invited to speak before a business association he was with. He formally gave an allowance to whoever was the mayor.

Pimentel suggested that the group suppose instead the needs of police officers or the immediate members of their families, primarily in the education of their children.

"The police there were so poorly paid that if somehow their or their family's educational needs were taken care of, it would reduce the probability of their sinking deeper and deeper into the mire of corruption. His suggestion was accepted and as a result the morale of the police certainly rose," Pimentel said.

The second example involved the public building he built during studies for the city.

"I told the suppliers that if they wanted to help the city, they should deduct from their bids whatever amounts they gave as commission to officials. In that way, the delivered commission would benefit the people of the city directly and the corrupt practice of city hall officials," he said.

Just say 'No'

The Commission on Audit later found that the dump trucks bought by the city were substantially priced lower than the same models bought in northern Mindanao. In the process, Pimentel said, he learned that the best way to stop corruption was simply to say "No."

But in the world of the practical, in order to serve the people faithfully, Pimentel said the public servant must possess at least three Cs: character which includes integrity, competency (the ability to get things done) and courage (the virtue to speak to and do what is right).

As I pondered Pimentel's three Cs, my mind drifted to the words of another senator, the late US Sen. Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts, who summed up his own life's work in three words: "The work goes on, the cause endures, the hope still lives and the dream shall never die."

In private life, Aquilino Pimentel Jr. continues as a public servant making dreams come true.

The author is chief executive of Alcorbello International Business Consultancy, a think tank that specializes in business planning, management training, marketing strategy, corporate communication and in transforming political, social and technological trends into business policy that works. Comments are welcome at e-mail cnbc2000@gmail.com.

LACSON: His choice: Run to come home

Missing bank exec had taste for high life, 'new shiny things'

From page A1

But Ang's father, Manila Councilor Bernie Ang, said the business that his son was being prosecuted in an effort to prevent him from opposing purported irregularities in the Sandiganbayan bidding.

"There is a concerted effort to destroy him because Bryan was alleged to expose something he could not take. He was about to reveal those things and told the management about what he found wrong in the system, and they jumped the gun on him," the father said.

In a statement issued Friday, Citibank said it was looking into "questionable" transactions initiated by a wealth management executive suspected to have extended some dispositions of its branch in Binondo, Manila.

Ang, 38, was not named in the statement. But banking sources confirmed it was he, and said he was believed to have slipped out of the country.

"We have filed criminal and civil cases against him, supported by his own admissions and very strong documentary evidence. We are working closely with the relevant authorities who are assisting us in this matter," Citibank said.

Flashy cars

Ang drives around in expensive European cars, including a Peugeot convertible, a two-door BMW sports car, and a Mercedes Benz CLS coupe, the schoolmate said.

He is known to wear expensive watches and has been seen using a Vertu, a high-end cellphone.

As an officer handling bank accounts of around P4 million, Ang might have been driven to acquire fancy cars and high-end items no matter the price, the schoolmate said.

Ang was described as low-key, taikimannered and coming from a respectable family "no stay kaya" (with means).

He was popular and well-liked by his classmates at Xavier School, an exclusive school catering to Chinese-Filipino families based in Greenhills, San Juan City.

Ang graduated from Xavier in 1992 and went to the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City, for his degree in economics.

The schoolmate said he was very active in Xavier's alumni association and even ran for president of the group but lost by one vote.

He lot of people know him, and he knows a lot of people. Of course, this is where he sourced his clientele, but he was respected and trusted," the schoolmate said.

At one point in Ang's career at Citibank, the schoolmate said, his superiors imposed on him a quota of P5-million a month in deposits.

"Having that kind of a quota can be very stressful," the schoolmate said. "A lot of the alumni are very disappointed. The name of our school is at stake. We can't believe one of our own would do such a thing."

Councilor Ang said his son was prepared to answer the charges.

Fear for his life

"Bryan is hiding, not because of the charges, but because he is scared for his life. He knows and is ready to reveal a lot of things," the father said, adding:

"Why is he being vilified and crucified or allegedly?"

The councilor cited claims where his son was accused of distributing links on affidavits and withdrawing a client's money.

"How was Bryan able to do that without the bank knowing?" he said. "The normal bank [Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas] conducts an audit every year. Citibank does an audit every year. The bank authenticates certificates. Don't tell me they did not review right away and only recently found out."

The councilor pointed out that Ang had been with Citibank for 10 years and was a consistent winner of international awards as its top salesman. "Why are they persecuting him now? Is it because they are hiding something?"

Irony

The councilor said Ang had realized that his wealth management job at Citibank was just doing the country any good because he was siphoning money abroad.

Early this month, Ang decided to inform Citibank of his resignation—a move, the father said, that brought trouble for his son.

Ironically, the father said, Citibank issued a letter to its clients last month that it was to deal with Ang, but reportedly withdrew the letter this month after his son expressed his misgivings.

"They might have been scared of the exposé that Bryan was planning to do. Their intention now it is discredit him at all cost even if it makes the bank look stupid," the councilor said.

He observed that the bank usually kept an issue like this under wraps but had surprisingly publicized it in dog's case.

"He is doing this [exposé] for the country," the councilor said, adding that his son was open to resolving in a congressional inquiry should legislators decide to conduct a probe into Citibank's alleged scoundrel.

Isolated case

In its statement, Citibank said the employment of the person in question had been terminated.

"Although the investigation is still ongoing, we believe this is an isolated case, and we are taking all necessary measures to prevent our clients," the bank added.

It also said it had identified a "small" number of affected clients.

"We are reviewing these accounts, and our priority is to work closely with these clients to ensure a satisfactory outcome," it said. With a report from Doris C. Bonoan

Foreign airlines hard put to take up slack for PAL

By Paolo G. Montecillo

THE GOVERNMENT may have a hard time finding foreign airlines to fly routes that may be left vacant in the event that Philippine Airlines (PAL) is penalized by a labor arbitration official of the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) said.

"We've been talking to other carriers about the possibility of a strike at PAL, and if they can pick up the slack," CAB Deputy Executive Director Percendo Porcincula said in a recent interview.

He said the government was ready to grant special permits to Middle Eastern, North American and Asian carriers that serve routes similar to many of PAL international flights.

"Some airlines say they can take up part of PAL's operations, but most say their resources are already overstretched just servicing their own routes," he said.

Foreign carriers, in particular, also do not relish the fact that their services will be tapped on such short notice in case PAL eventually goes under.

"What we're asking from them is a very temporary but a lot of them are not so willing to commit," Porcincula said.

European airlines and airports had been hit by a wave of strikes earlier this year. Various American airlines are also currently involved in contentious contract negotiations with their pilots and flight attendants.

Porcincula said it might be easier to get local airlines to take PAL's place. "Most of PAL's domestic routes are also being served by other (domestic) airlines," he said. However, the adjustments that would be needed in their flight plans to take in the sudden surge of volume may take some time, he added.

"If the strike happens soon, local carriers won't be able to handle it," he said, stressing the need for PAL management and the company's workers to resolve their issues to avoid the inconvenience to the riding public.

He said many airlines said they are still canvassing their board offices regarding the government's proposal.

Strengthening PAL flights and the adoption of an "open skies" or liberalized air rights regime are among the efforts the government is looking at in the event that discussions between PAL and its workers fail.

PAL president Jaime Bautista said he welcomed government moves toward the liberalization of the country's air industry "to the mandatory point" like Charles Lee and Dennis, noting the congestion at Manila's airports.

"PAL is not against open skies," Bautista said, but he still argued that whatever air rights the Philippines gives to foreign carriers should be reciprocated by other countries.

Philippine flag carriers have also been blacklisted in some airports due to the country's failure to upgrade safety standards.

Bishops see record decline in Catholic Church weddings

By Philip C. Tubeza

WHILE THE debate on the divorce bill rages in Congress, Catholic marriages in this country are on track for a record drop this year and the next, a Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) official said yesterday.

Fr. Melvin Castro, executive secretary of the CBCP Episcopal Commission on Family and Life, said that based on the Catholic Directory, the number of church marriages is set to drop from 377,940 in 2008-2009 to just 360,000 this year and in 2011.

Castro said this was because Filipinos were marrying at a later age and couples were opting for civil marriages first before going for a "grand" church wedding.

"(The) trend is Filipinos are getting married at a later age, unlike before when Filipinos would tie the knot when they're still young," said Castro in an interview over the Church's Radio Veritas.

"Because those getting married are getting older, the number of people tying the knot is dimishing going down."

He said that in the diocese of Imus, the number of those opting for civil marriages was "on the rise because it is first where you have it before the mayor." They later get married in church.

"It's not because of the church here but because as Filipinos they want to prepare for a church wedding. Filipinos are very particular that they have a grand church wedding so they postpone it," Castro said.

He said the Church had also noticed a "glaring phenomenon" of more and more Filipino women marrying foreigners.

"We have a glaring phenomenon of so many interracial marriages involving Filipinos. Maybe foreigners are really falling in love with Filipinas. So it's interracial and, more often than not, (it's a mixed marriage with the man having a different religion)," Castro said.

He noted instances, the groom would convert and get baptized in the Church but that is disintegrated—in context just for the sake of marriage," he said.

Castro said Filipino women entering into interracial marriages were a "cyberspace thing happening now just in the country but also in the large Filipino communities abroad.

"You will also notice this abroad where there are really many Filipinos getting married, either with a fellow Filipino or with somebody from another race," he said.

Castro noted that marriages between Catholic Filipinos and non-Catholics increased from 8,900 in 2008-2009 to 10,200 this year.

"My advice (marriages), even if they're not both Catholic but are also (Catholic) first, there should be a decree or dispensation from the bishop allowing it," Castro said.

"Unlike formal conversions to other sects, we advise it and we should respect marriage. However, there is written decided and signed by the couple that the non-Catholic should respect his wife or his husband's being Catholic," he said.

Church makes pitch for Pakistan

THE CATHOLIC Church in the country has urged the faithful to send aid to the 20 million people made homeless by the devastating floods in Pakistan.

Manila Auxiliary Bishop Broderick Pabillo, Caritas Philippines president, said the agency was consulting with other bishops on how Filipinos could support international relief efforts.

"We are now making an appeal to all the dioceses to help us provide financial assistance for flood-devastated Pakistan," Pabillo said in an interview with CBCPNews.

The bishop said donations may be coursed through Caritas Philippines, the country unit of the National Secretariat for Social Action, Justice and Peace (Nassa).

Caritas-Inmed Caritas International unit appealed for $0.5 million to help Pakistan's flood victims as the "situation grows increasingly desperate."

It said that over 1,600 people died in the disaster even as heavy rains continued to cause flooding in areas like Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Baluchistan and parts of Punjab, Sind, Jammu and Kashmir.

"The priority is to ensure that people have food, water, shelter and medical help. There are so many people who are in grave difficulty," said Aoife Gill, Caritas Pakistan secretary general.

Philip C. Tubeza

Free health worker, Aquino asked

THE GROUP Pagbabago! People's Movement for Change yesterday sought President Aquino's help in obtaining the release of Cirina "Jaddjie" Oliveros, one of the "Morong 43" arrested health workers, who gave birth to a son last month.

Oliveros had asked the Morong Regional Trial Court in her request on resignation for at least six months while she cares for and breastfeeds her newborn.

The court denied her request last week.

Oliveros, who is appealing the ruling, was brought back to Camp Bagong Diwa from the Philippine General Hospital, where she delivered her baby.

According to Pagbabago, seven of political prisoners were released from detention ever during martial law. Ms. Aquino's mother, the late President Corazon Aquino, had also freed political prisoners.

The President should do the same, the group said.

"We would like to remind the president that even during the time of Ferdinand Marcos, women and children political prisoners were released from prison on humanitarian grounds," it said.

Leila B. Salaverria

Pinoy workers to Guam don't have to pay fees

By Cynthia Balana and Philip C. Tubeza

THE PHILIPPINE Embassy in Guam has warned Filipinos against paying recruitment fees to placement agencies, pointing out that the United States maintains a "no-recruitment fee" policy regarding foreign workers.

The embassy aired the warning as it continued to receive reports that Filipino applicants have paid unregulated placement fees to private employment agencies in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) warned recruitment agencies not to charge placement fees to temporary nonagricultural workers bound for the US, particularly Guam where a large military installation is being constructed.

"POEA has adopted a policy that prohibits the charging of placement fees from workers applying for jobs in countries that do not allow charging of such fees since 2001," the agency said.

"The US, including Guam, is now one such country that forbids the charging of placement fees from workers," it added.

The agency said other countries that prohibit the collection of placement fees from workers include the United Kingdom, Ireland, Israel, the Netherlands, and some parts of Canada like Alberta, Manitoba, British Columbia and Saskatchewan.

Administrator Jennifer Javellana-Merdeck said that recruitment agencies that violate this policy face administrative charges and cancellation of their licenses.

Philippine Consul General Reynaldo A. Hernandez, in a report to the Department of Foreign Affairs, said he met with US Immigration Deputy Acting Field Preventive Manager Clay Allen to discuss measures that could be jointly undertaken by both countries to inform the public about the "no recruitment fee" policy for workers bound for the US and its territories under the H2-B classification, or nonagricultural temporary worker.

Allen was accompanied by Reynaldo Beltran, consular investigations assistant at the US Embassy in Manila and Douglas Carter of the consular security service.

During the meeting, Allen disclosed that his office had been processing applicants hoping to enter Guam who admitted that they were paying manpower agencies placement or recruitment fees.

He added that Justice Minister Francis Sarmiento, a Philippine-based manpower agency, recommend to irregularly operate as a labor recruitment agency despite the US Embassy in Manila's notification to the POEA.

Allen also expressed his willingness to cooperate with Philippine government officials, including the Philippine media, for an information campaign on the US policy. He added that his office was looking closely at applications for H2-B workers.

The US Embassy's antitrust division has been working closely with the Guam Department of Labor and other federal agencies in Guam to ascertain that workers coming from the Philippines are employed in the jobs they were hired for, and at the salary scales stated in their applications.

Labor Secretary Rosalinda Baldoz earlier said that around 1,000 jobs for skilled construction workers in Guam were available in Filipinos with the requisite three of US military facilities there, Japan.

Baldoz said that the construction of a $700-million resort hotel was expected to begin early next year in the US territory.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Sunday, August 22, 2010
21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Is 66: 18-21

Thus I am going to gather the nations of every tongue, and they will witness my glory for I will perform a wonderful thing among them. Then I will send some of this survivors to the nations—Tarshish, Put, Lud, Messhech, Rosh, Tubal, and Javan—to the distant coastlands who have never heard of me or witnessed my glory. They will proclaim my glory among the nations. They will bring your kindred from all the nations as an offering to Yahweh: on horses, in chariots, in litters, on mules, on camels to my holy mountain in Jerusalem, says Yahweh, just as the Israelites bring offerings in clean vessels to the house of Yahweh. Then I will choose priests and levites even from these, says Yahweh.

2nd Reading: Heb 12:5-7, 11-13

You no longer the comforting words that Wisdom addresses to you as children: My son, pay attention when the Lord corrects you and do not be discouraged when he punishes you. For the Lord corrects those he loves and chastises everyone he accepts as a son.

What you endure it in order to correct you. God treats you like sons and what son is not corrected by his father?

All correction is painful at the moment, rather than pleasant; later it brings the fruit of peace, that is, holiness without which none is to see the Lord.

So, then, your drooping hands, and ill-steadied your trembling knees; make level the ways for your feet, so that the lame may not be disabled but healed.

Gospel: Lk 13:22-30

Jesus went through towns and villages teaching and making his way to Jerusalem. Someone asked him, "Lord, is it true that few people will be saved?"

And Jesus answered, "Do your best to enter by the narrow door, for many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able. When once the master of the house has got up and locked the door, you will stand outside, then you will knock at the door calling: 'Lord, open to us.' But he will say to you: 'I do not know where you come from.'

Then you will say: We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets.' But he will say: 'I do not know where you come from. Away from me all you workers of evil.'

You will weep and grind your teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and all the prophets in the Kingdom of God, and you yourselves left outside. Others will take its table in the Kingdom of God, people coming here from east and west, from north and south. Some who are among the last will be the first, and others who came first will be last!"

Commentary

"People will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south and sit down at the feast in the Kingdom of God."

It is those who do the will of God whom God will save regardless of their race or religion, their gender or color, their wealth or their political philosophy.

God's house, as Prince of Bible said, has many mansions.

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Quest for justice continues for Ninoy Aquino

From page A1

to death by government soldiers on the tarmac of the old Manila International Airport on Aug. 21, 1983, in his return from a three-year exile in the United States.

A Marcos government investigation concluded that Ninoy had been shot by Rolando Galman who was instantly killed by soldiers. The case has since been referred to as the Aquino-Galman double-murder case.

Ninoy's soldiers were convicted for the killing of Ninoy but the incriminated were later acquitted.

The assassination triggered the anti-dictatorship movement that culminated in the 1986 Edsa People Power Revolution that brought down the Marcos dictatorship and catapulted Ninoy's widow to the presidency.

Forgiveness and vengeance

Arroyo's homily focused on the theme of forgiveness. She said the President's late mother had already forgiven those behind her father's murder. He said Arroyo's homily was enlightening.

"It was natural that I look for justice ... (When he returned), my father was no longer allowed to speak. He was shot in the back while still in the stairwell and then thrown on the tarmac like a pig," he said.

"Then he was thrown into the van ... And then, they will say that they had nothing to do with the murder. It's difficult to accept," he added referring to the Arabisco Security Command soldiers who were pardoned last year by former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and paroled from the Aquino family.

Not a priority

But Mr. Aquino indicated that pursuing the murderers of his father would not be a priority.

He said he intends to attend to the needs of farmers who till the land, students who strive in their studies and those that have been oppressed by influential forces "such as the victims of the Maguindanao massacre."

"The justice that we should strive for should not be justice for our own sake but justice for the whole nation," he said.

He insisted that there are still forces that want to return to the type of regime where a few powerful individuals manage to abuse the people.

"Sunrise for all ... that is what we will insist on," he said.

Yesterday was also the only time that Mr. Aquino has directly addressed the issue of his father's still-unsolved assassination.

Earlier this month, presidential spokesperson Edwin Lacierda said Mr. Aquino would allow the remaining legal processes in the double-murder case to continue. But he said the President was taking a "hands-off" policy to avoid any speculation that he was trying to influence the conduct of the case.

The Department of Justice has issued a warrant for the arrest of Capt. Felipe Valerio, an accused in the Aquino-Galman double murder but who was never arraigned and was never tried.

Chief Public Attorney Persida Acosta believes Valerio holds the key to commanding the person who ordered Ninoy's killing.

Valerio is believed to be living somewhere in North America.

Early bird

A crowd of about a hundred people quietly gathered near the adjacent tombs of Ninoy and his wife, the late President Corazon Aquino, despite Mr. Aquino's earlier appeal that he be allowed to pray for his father in peace.

Mr. Aquino arrived for the 4 p.m. Manila Memorial Park Mass well ahead of the rest of the family. His nephews Joshua Aquino and Baby James Yap in tow. He played with Josh and Baby James while waiting for the rest of his family to arrive.

His sisters—Ballsy Cruz, Pinky Abellada, Viel Dee—and their husbands and children arrived minutes later.

Mr. Aquino's defeated, aging mare, former Sen. Manuel Roxas, arrived while Arroyo was delivering the homily.

Vice President Jejomar Binay and a daughter arrived minutes later.

Binay and Bray did not acknowledge each other even if they were standing just a few meters away from each other.

Mr. Aquino's youngest sister, Kris, arrived after the homily.

Remember this day

Abalos-Bray yesterday appealed to Filipinos to take time to call to mind the martyrdom of Ninoy even as they enjoyed the holiday weekend with their families.

"Let's enjoy the weekend but let us also take time to remember why Aug. 21 is a holiday," said Governor Risky Cavanding of the Provincial Communications and Strategic Development Office over the state-run dzRB.

"This is a good opportunity for us to remember what this day is about in history, the constellation that it had for our history ... that one man who can set aside his own personal comfort, his interests and even his life can achieve greater good for the whole country," Cavanding said.

"I all people will come together to do the right thing and to help each other out I think the idea here is we can build a better country regardless," he added.

Remembrance at the tarmac

Earlier yesterday, a modest crowd that included members of the Edsa People Power Commission and August Twenty-One Movement and officials of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA), gathered for a commemorative program at the tarmac of the airport named after Ninoy, on the same spot where he fell.

Headed by members of the diplomatic corps, they offered flowers at the commemorative marker written by National Artist for Literature Dr. Alejandro Roces.

His nephew, Bobot to Aquino, a son of Ninoy's brother, Agapito Aquino, read the advised speech that Ninoy had prepared which he failed to deliver.

"I have returned of my free will to join the ranks of those struggling to restore our rights and freedoms through nonviolence. I seek no confrontation. I only pray and will strive for a genuine national reconciliation founded on justice," part of the speech read.

"I am prepared for the worst, and here, divided against the advice of my mother, my spiritual advisor, many of my trusted friends and a few of my more valued political mentors, I, death sentence awaits me," it added.

"I return to my country and to an uncertain future with only determination and faith to offer—faith in our people and faith in God."

Some of the poems that Ninoy had written in prison were interpreted in song by the Philippine International Theater Institute, Centro Escolar, savoy Dreams Ensemble and the Musikgal Trio.

Diplomats from the countries associated with Ninoy's ordeal and freedom joined the gathering.

The ceremony was followed by a Mass, a tradition that the Ninoy Aquino Movement had began in 1986.

Private laying rites at the Sulo's departure area, where another memorial to Ninoy can be found, capped the event.

Bikol's way

The community of Tabaco, Albay, paid tribute to Ninoy's martyrdom by displaying his portrait at the city government's session hall throughout the month of August.

Through a resolution passed by the city council, the city government every August 21 to 31 is mandated (everyone) and commences the heroism and sacrifices of Ninoy" said Bikan councilor Gil Abaldo, who authored the resolution filed in 2008.

"Our aim is this portrait, which is actually a photo of Aquino lifted from the Internet, was first unveiled last year at the old city hall building.

He denied there was any political motive behind the resolution.

"We didn't know (Noynoy) would be the president. At the time the resolution was made, he had not confirmed his plans to run for President yet," he said. With Tina G. Santos and Marvione Glass, Inquirer Southern Luzon

DEATH AT THE TARMAC A year plaque stood on the spot where Ninoy Aquino fell 27 years ago as friends, relatives and supporters offer flowers at the tarmac of the airport now bearing the name of the late opposition leader. JOVEN CARDONA

THE INFAMOUS VAN that carried the fallen Ninoy Aquino from the airport now lies abandoned and forgotten at the Villamor Air Base. ANDREW CAMPANILLA

SALUTE TO NINOY Quezon City Mayor Herbert Bautista leads the wreath laying at the Ninoy Aquino Monument on Timog Avenue. NOEL CELIS

NINOY AQUINO DAY is also celebrated in Tagaytay City as Mayor Abraham Tolentino leads city officials, faculty members and students of the City College of Tagaytay in a wreath-laying ceremony at the Aquino monument in Silang Crossing Rotonda. Erected in 1997 at the heart of Tagaytay City, the monument serves as "an edifice of courage, patriotism, nonviolence in democracy of the people of Tagaytay as exemplified by Ninoy Aquino."

Sarah Balabagan: The next chapter

From page A1

Today, Sarah spends five to six months a year abroad as a full-time Christian inspirational speaker. In the United States west coast, where she spent over four months in two separate stays last year, churches and sponsors promote her talk as "The New Sarah Balabagan Story," a takeoff from her biography released in 1997.

Just back from a three-month stint in the US, Sarah told the Inquirer over coffee at a mall in Makati City last week that she was in the final stages of saving up her own foundation to help overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) who had been abused recover from their trauma.

She hopes to launch it next month before she leaves for yet another long speaking tour in America, with possibly an extended trip to Canada.

Her new ministry makes up much of the testimony she shares with her audiences.

Sarah, who turned 31 on Monday (Aug. 16) and recently divorced her husband of seven years, Russell Yerpes, admits she has survived not one, but two ravagers in life, death—the first in the UAE's Al Ain prison in 1995 where she was subjected to 100 lashes, the second in a dark cell of depression in 2003 that had her wishing she had not survived her prison or death.

Articles about her in the US express hope she does not have yet a third death threat from her religious conversion, which is forbidden in some Muslim countries. But Sarah sighs and just smiles. She says she has not actually joined another Church or pressed before idols. What she has, she explains, is "a very personal relationship with Jesus," who she sincerely feels saved her from the brink of suicide.

From prison to show biz

She relates that when she was finally released from prison and returned to Manila in August 1996), she was feted and swept into yet another world—show biz.

The media attention was intense. She had always loved singing and was thankful for the voice schoolship arranged for her with the Center for Pop Music. Her first record led to a recording contract with Sony in 1999. The also came with many invitations for concerts here and abroad.

"The Sarah Balabagan Story," the controversial movie about her experiences in the Middle East, reportedly earned for her over P4 million.

She was also given the chance to return to school, having only finished Grade 5 because of her family's poverty. After passing a Department of Education test that granted her a high school diploma, AMA Computer College accepted her as a mass communications student.

Then Sarah dropped out of school. Everything was happening so fast and Sarah found herself pregnant in 1998 after a short affair with a media personality.

"I didn't know how to deal with suddenly being a mother, a single mother at that," she recalls. She found a new love partner in Vergara, a backup dancer, in 2000 and she had two more children. But the love affairs that when she married him in 2003, she was in the throes of a deep depression.

She reveals that the reasons of the past had haunted her: She hears the signs...she writes on her back would start to throb.

"When I felt unwanted and angry, my back would ache. I would remember the painful lashes in the Al Ain prison," she says.

There were times, she says, that she regretted having survived. "Sana namatay na ako noon. Sana hindi na ako nabuhay (I wish I had died back there. It really I hadn't survived)."

One of 14 siblings from a poor family in Sulsan Kudarat town in Maguindanao, Sarah was only 14 years old when she went to work as a domestic helper in the UAE in 1994. (The recruiter had listed her age on her passport as 16). She alone started barely a month after the legendary work at the home of the elderly Moharned Al Buraimi, in the end of that fateful night, the elderly employer lay dead with 16 stab wounds. She was sentenced to death by firing squad in 1995. After appeals by various officials, the victim's family accepted blood money (disbursed by businessman Wilfredo Gatchalian) and her sentence was commuted to prison time and 100 lashes.

'I can take it'

She was 16 then, still a minor, and there were rumors that her bones were not strong enough to withstand the lashes. So the penalty was divided into 50 lashes a day for five days.

When then Philippine ambassador Roy Seneres and other international officials came to visit Sarah in between the lashings, she had told them: "Kaya ko 'to (I can take it)."

"I wasn't lies," she now shares. "Ang sabi-sabi nila talaga yung gusto ko sabi. Pero walang ka, kung magpakawa pa sila, baka pagalitan pa. Ang sasapi pa, at mas sapitan ako ng taong galit (Whatever they want to hear I say. Because if I say no, they would be brought back to the cell. There were no rewards because she was allowed to nurse a Taiwan during the whippings, she says. Then she would be brought back again, her back still swollen, for the next round of lashes. She could not sleep on her back for days. It took months before the pain went away.

The country celebrated her release, happy she survived. But Sarah had somehow lost what mean survive victims say is a second part of the healing process—if not the opportunity to seek redress, at least an acknowledgement of the cruel, humiliating and degrading punishment.

Reliving the trauma

Back home, when she was singing on stage or partying with friends, she would forget. But suddenly everything came crashing back. In her mind, she was again in her cell.

A close friend in the entertainment industry, the popular singer-actor, introduced her in 2003 to Pastor Augusto Cesar Medrano.

Reliving those moments with the pastor, Sarah finally cried the cream of a little girl hurt by the whipping.

The pastor shared with her the story of the ladies who inflicted on Jesus Christ. That was my turning point, she says. She had wondered: she wrote, "The Passion of the Christ," and cried.

After that, Sarah says she underwent three months of group counseling under the supervision of a psychiatrist.

"Little by little I could feel my anger subside," she says.

Spiritual conversion

Shortly, she was able to work out her problems. Her marriage, for one, was on the rocks. "We tried to make it work but failed," she recalls.

Just a few months ago, before leaving for her Janet...Sally speaking tour, she and Russell signed a divorce document following the Muslim family laws under which they were married.

Today, Sarah has learned not to take up the traumas in her life with every setback. She has moved on. The pain on her back has also subsided.

"When I'm stressed...I just get a headache now," she says and breaks into a laugh.

Counseling, she says, has helped her be a better mom. "I have learned to respect my children's wants and not be accustoming and short-tempered."

Her spiritual conversion, she says, has given purpose to her life. "But's strong (unquestionable for) his brothers who, to take-up who up to Christian, what could I be proud of? That I was abused and I murdered someone)?"

Now when she retells her story before audiences, she says she finds she is fulfilling a higher purpose. "For me, it's no longer about what happened to me in the past. Now, I share my experiences to testify to God's grace... and to bring others hope for the future."

Paying it forward

The idea of a foundation that will include a shelter for returning OFWs also surfaced about two years ago in 2007.

She says the failure of a girl working in the Middle East had called her, seeking her help. The girl, also from Sultan Kudarat, had complained that her employer had abused her for five days. She fell from the third floor of an apartment building and escaped.

Sarah says she tried calling Philippine officials in Dubai but failed to talk to whoever was in charge of the girl's case. "Pinagpasa-pasahan lang sila (They were giving me the runaround)."

One day she heard the girl had made it back to Manila after she withdrew the case she had filed against her employer. Overseas welfare administrators simply gave her money to go home to Sultan Kudarat.

Sarah knew this was not enough. The girl's feet were still swollen from the fall, she recalls. She helped the girl get proper medical treatment and file a case against the agency. She also asked financial aid for the girl's similar friends.

OFW to OFW

Sarah envisions a shelter staffed by former OFWs trained in counseling. "But then yung OFW to OFW, magkaiba-iba kasi kami (It's different when one OFW talks to another. We understand each other)."

Recently, during a trip to Malaysia, the Philippine ambassador there asked her to share her stories with Filipinas who had been jailed for various offenses. There was an instant connection between her and the detainees, she says. "Up to now, they text me. 'Ate Sarah, 'Sis hanik' or 'Tree lawa nehanun?'"

Would she consider returning to the Middle East?

"You know, I am praying that I be given a chance to go back. There are so many of our countrymates there who need words of encouragement, words of hope."

SARAH BALABAGAN family in their teens in 1995. Inquirer Archives

Taxman goes after bet who spent ₱200

From page B1

mayoral candidate here, who spent P200 in the May elections.

"I have two options—wait for the BIR to sue me or simply pay them," said Peter Pucos, one of nine mayoralty candidates here.

"But as a concerned poor citizen, I'd better pay up because the (BIR) might not be able to collect millions of pesos in outstanding tax from other candidates who underreported their campaign expenses," he said.

Pucos was supposed to pay only P10 which is equivalent to a 1-percent withholding tax on his campaign expenses of P200.

However, he failed to pay the tax before the June 10 deadline.

He claimed that he went to the BIR office two to three weeks before the deadline to pay P10 but the personnel there did not seem to give importance to his expense report.

Letter from the BIR

Pucos did not bother to follow up the tax liability until the received registered mail from the BIR.

In a letter signed by Dio Lorenzo district officer Ady Simon, the BIR said it was collecting P10 tax, P5.00 surcharge, 12 percent interest and P500.00 "legal incompliant compromise" or a grand total of P510.00 in withholding tax liability.

Pucos, who spent P200 in the last elections, garnered 88 votes or a P3 investment per vote.

"The number of votes I got wasn't bad. If I had spent as much as the other candidates, I might have won," he said.

A winner in other ways

Although he lost, the 53-year-old bachelor said he still felt he was a winner. He cited the many public forums where he was able to articulate his positions on various issues and concerns such as the city's garbage woes, the lack of development planning and other urban problems.

For his election campaign, Pucos said he spent P100 on two rubber stamp pads which he bought from a sidewalk vendor. He used on one stamp pad was the phrase, "Peter Pucos for Mayor. The anti-corruption one," while the other pad had the words, "The Poorest Vote."

He said he spent another P100 photocopying a newspaper clipping detailing his position against alleged corrupt practices and other issues. At 50 centavos a copy, he reproduced 100 copies and distributed them during the campaign.

INQUIRER

OPINION

Shadow play

IT HAS already been 10 years since public relations professional Bubby Dacer and his driver Emmanuel Corbito were murdered, but justice continues to elude their families in what should be another deplorable instance of the culture of impunity fostered by a justice and law enforcement system that is prone to political shadow play, borne reading and outright bribery. The circumstances this month do not bode well for the resolution of the case, much less for the reform and rehabilitation of the justice system.

EDITORIAL

Recently, National Bureau of Investigation intelligence chief Rod Luzada told news members of the press that former senior superintendent Cesar Mancao II, a vital witness in the double-murder case, had been removed from the Witness Protection Program (WPP) of the Department of Justice for violating certain "protocols." Mancao has accused Sen. Panfilo Lacson, the chief of the Philippine National Police in 2000, of the killings. His testimony was instrumental in the issuance early this year of an arrest warrant against Lacson, who has gone into hiding. Lacson accused the then Arroyo administration of fabricating evidence against him in retaliation for his being a regular critic of the government. Luzada's disclosure alarmed various sectors and raised suspicions that the protection for Mancao had been lifted by the NBI because the bureau is now headed by Director Magtanggol Gatdula, who was part of the defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force of the Ramon administration, which was headed by then Vice President Joseph Estrada and where Lacson was a key officer.

It was Justice Secretary Leila de Lima who later clarified that Mancao had not been dropped from the WPP. The NBI is under the administrative supervision of the DOJ, and De Lima said "there was no suspension or termination" of Mancao's coverage. She added the night adi Gatdula "is sanction, censure or reprimand" Luzada for making an "inaccurate disclosure." We don't know if De Lima indeed had asked Gatdula for Luzada's censure or sanction, but Luzada should suffer for his indiscretion. Apologizing for the gaffe, he said he "chose the wrong words."

"I lacked information when I said that," he said. "But it truth and to fact, he (Mancao) is still with the WPP."

The apology is fine, but the lapse was too serious as to be dismissed easily. Coming from an intelligence chief, the claim of mistake was very suspicious. Moreover, Gatdula's inaction over Luzada's gaffe fuels suspicion that the NBI is bifurcated toward protecting Mancao. Gatdula has denied he would act with any partiality, despite the fact that he had worked for Lacson before. But this is hardly reassuring for Mancao.

Is there shadow play here? Alas, Mancao contributed to the shadow play when he revealed before the press attempts allegedly made by the Lacson camp to make him retract his testimony. He said he would not give in to the pressure, but why mention the attempts at all? De Lima herself was flabbergasted with the claim since she was the one who presented Mancao to the press to reaffirm the government's WPP cover for the witness. Interviewed later by the press, she said Mancao did not tell her of the alleged bribery attempts.

Lacson has denied the bribery charge, and insisted that Mancao was playing games because he knows the court testimony of Glenn Dumlao, another ex-policeman, is damaging to his statement. Dumlao has denied Mancao's claim that the senator was behind the killings. But Lacson's denial of course is self-serving. He continues to be on the run and refuses to turn himself in. De Lima has urged him to come out to protect his innocence, promising that the new Aquino administration would not persecute him. But of course, no special treatment either for Lacson. De Lima has said.

It is now up to Lacson to clear himself. As a senator and lawmaker, he should be the first to uphold the law and subject himself to its operations. He might have compelling reasons to hide as a fugitive in the former administration, but those reasons hardly exist now in the new regime. The essence has vastly changed. And even if the situation hasn't changed radically, he should be able to make calculated risks. It is time to redeem himself. At the least, it is time for Lacson to come clean and face the music—and put a stop to the shadow play.

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The other side of surveillance

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

IMAGINE A world where everything we do, or say, or write can be seen, heard or read on the Internet—in short, a world that has become the global equivalent of Big Brother's house. Such a world will not allow any space for solitude or privacy, except maybe a tiny cubicle in our minds in which we keep under lock and key what remains of our innermost personal thoughts.

This world of total surveillance will change the way we live, the way we perceive, the way we think, and the way we experience life. It will transform human relationships beyond imagination. It will overturn our values and beliefs.

Will it not wipe out crime, cruelty and vice, fence, dishonesty and betrayal? Will it not make human beings follow the straight and narrow path of a clean and orderly life? Perhaps, for a while, yes; the awareness that an all-seeing eye (what Jeremy Bentham called a "panopticon") is watching all the time may act as a deterrent against deviance. But, in the long term, I think it will not. Deviance will just become more contemplative, gradually shedding off its crude value and transparent. Like reality TV, what initially elicits reactions becomes boring through repetition, and we lose our capacity for surprise or revulsion.

All this may seem counter-intuitive in the face of recent events in our society where offensive behavior by those in power has been captured on tape or on camera, and broadcast for everyone to see and hear. The examples that immediately come to mind include the "Hello Garci" tapes which exposed the computer way to rig the 2004 presidential election; the mobile phone video of what appears to be a police subdual of a gang of motor vehicle robbers, and the more recent video clip, taken with a cell phone camera, of a police officer executing a crime suspect in a Manila police sub-station. The saving of these audio and video recordings has, in general, had a positive "constitutive" effect: It has awakened public vigilance. It has made Filipinos see that an unlikely extrajudicial public con help end the culture of impunity that is destroying the fabric of our national life.

These obvious benefits must not blind us, however, to the wickedness of living under continued surveillance. The right to privacy is a hard-won right that belongs to the modern individual. We cannot take it for granted. There are many aspects of our lives we prefer to keep private, to be shared, if at all, only with close kin and intimate friends. There are moments when we wish to be left alone. "We live thick and interwoven with each other's eyes," wrote Henry David Thoreau, in sought solitude by living in the woods. Today, it is not easy to avoid surveillance. A paranoid citizen has enveloped our daily life like invisible cloth, leaving the individual as a potential enemy. Inside department stores, in elevators, on the streets, and squares images, and closed-circuit TV cameras (CCTV) installed almost everywhere, have made every assertion or practice of privacy a possible form of terrorist contemplation.

Some say that if you have nothing to hide, you should have nothing to worry about. Or, if you wish to remain private, you should completely stay out of the public limelight. Or, that only the powerful who must hide their corruption and their oppression of others need worry about privacy. I think those are fatally naive views for someone to subscribe into people's private lives. Surreptitious recordings tend to saturate a life of their own. Taken out of context, the most harmless conversations and images acquire the most incriminating meanings, depending on the camera angle which they are recorded.

Even actors who spend a good deal of their lives onstage crave for quiet moments backstage, where they can be themselves. While it is natural to want to present ourselves in the best possible light, we pine for those moments when we do not have to perform. Imagine what life would be like if every conversation was potentially an interview—to be recorded, quoted and broadcast. I would think all the pleasure out of human speech. We would be choosing and weighing every word before we allow it to leave our lips as an utterance. We would be saying things that seem nothing, burdened by distrust, all communication would ground to a halt.

The other day, I was having coffee with a longtime friend from college. We do this every other month when we can find a common time. We exchange news about family and career. We talk about the country and the people of our generation who have gone away or are now in positions of power. It was mid-afternoon and we were seated at a corner table in a spacious coffee shop. Midway through our conversation, a young man took the table beside ours. He promptly pulled out his mobile phone, laid it on the table, and kept himself busy while waiting for his order. I did not notice anything unusual, but, after a while, my friend suddenly lowered his voice and wanted me that we were being recorded. He looked at the young man's cell phone on the table, and glanced at him. Immediately, the man touched a button on his phone, put it back into his pocket, and left.

How did you know? I asked my friend. "There were more than a dozen empty tables in the room," he said. "Yet he picked the one next to ours." I fiddled him that he was being paranoid. I could not imagine why anyone would want to record our conversations. Times have changed, he said grimly. Everyone is under surveillance.

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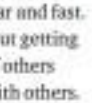
Stepping aside

MOMENTS



Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

Life is not about journeying far and fast. It is not about getting ahead of others but being with others. As we journey to God's heart

THE STORY is told about a woman who tried to help a victim of a car accident. While doing that, a nurse came and said, "Miss, excuse me. Stop back please! I've had a course in First Aid, and I am trained in giving CPR!"

The woman stopped aside, watched the procedure, then said, "It case you need a doctor, I'm just at your back."

• • •

In today's Gospel (Luke 13, 22-30), Jesus teaches His disciples to learn to step aside, i.e., to set one's agenda, set their agenda, to take precedence. He are not to limit God's love and generosity with our biases and limitations. A good question for us today is: Am I making God according to my own image and likeness?

• • •

I have on rare experienced driving behind a slow moving vehicle on the road? It is such a frustrating experience to be chased down by an escaping driver who wouldn't give way or step aside? As we go through life, many we not prevent others from moving up or leaving us.

• • •

Notice how people tend to outbox each other in taking a ride on elevators or escalators. Everybody wants to be first. I can't forget that Taiwan, out of simple habit and courtesy, I let an old woman board first. She looked at me and said: "Thank you and thank God there are still people like you!" It was no big deal really, but it meant a lot for her, and for me, too. It made me aware that little things do mean a lot for other people. Stepping aside for other people is something we all can do. It starts with the basic realization that there are other people in this world who are more important than us, or who have more needs than us, or who have more opportunities than us. Humility is the key. And respect. Next time you think of bulldozing other people, think of what Jesus said today's Gospel: "Some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last.

• • •

Where are they now who used to be first in everything? Where are they now who used to have the money, the power and the fame? Nobody stays on top forever. Everything fades, and everything is fleeting in this world. Remember the land because the people you meet when you are going up are the same people you meet on your way down.

• • •

What is stopping aside to a concrete way? Someone said that it is allowing other people would hear, patience when you are being hurt, disdance when scandal flows, thoughtfulness for another's woes, sharing whatever little we have, and being kind rather than being right most of the time. Try stepping aside sometime. It does wonders!

• • •

Instead of being upset when we have bad days and trials, why don't you step aside for God? That really does wonders! You'll be amazed how things just fall into places when you just do your best and put let God do the rest!

• • •

Today, let us take time to remember the people who stepped aside for us, and even stepped for us. We are what we are now because of people who guided us, accompanied us, gave us a ride, cheered us on, or simply let us pass. Praise God for these people! Let us do the same for others as we journey through life.

• • •

Today let us pray for people we may have bulldozed along the way. Let us ask God for forgiveness, for the times we just moved on and did not stop for people who needed our help. Finally, let us humbly step aside so that others can get going, and in so way get in the way in their journey through life.

• • •

Life is not about journeying far and fast. It is not about getting ahead of others but being with others. As we journey to God's heart.

• • •

Sunday Mananita invites you to a 'ay Asian on Aug. 28, 2010 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon at Ateneo's Hall, Christ the King Seminary. The topic is Cancer Awareness. The main speaker is Dr. Ruby Mumilla-ay of St. Luke's Medical Center. Registration fees: P200 for senior citizens and P500 for non-seniors. This will cover the luncheon and snacks. For inquiries please call 373-2262/09171410769.

• • •

A moment with the Lord:

Lord, teach me to learn how to step aside as I journey through life. Amen.

Who will discipline Supreme Court justices?

MAY SUPREME Court justices police their own ranks? Isn't it awkward, if not legally baseless, for the justices to discipline their own? In studies asked, in reaction to my column two weeks ago on the complaint for plagiarism raised by the Makati Police Organization in the Court. If not then, who else?

Impeachment by the House. To begin with, the Constitution clearly provides that Supreme Court members "may be removed from office" only by an impeachment to be initiated "exclusively" in the House of Representatives by not less than one-third (1/3) of all members of the Congress on grounds (1) culpable violation of the Constitution, (2) treason, (3) bribery, (4) graft and corruption, (5) other high crimes, or (6) betrayal of public trust. The Senate has the "sole" power to try and decide all cases of impeachment.

To date, only one Supreme Court justice has been successfully impeached by the House, made him found guilty by the Senate. The chance in recent memory a high court magistrate was halted in danger of removal was on Oct. 23, 2003 when Representative Gilberto C. Teodoro Jr. and Atty. Nelly Favis-Villafuerte moved to impeach then Chief Justice Hilario G. Davide Jr.

In "Francisco vs. House of Representatives" (Nov. 10, 2003), the Court barred the House from transmitting the articles of impeachment to the Senate, which had already received them from the House. "[n]o impeachment proceedings shall be initiated against the same official more than once within a period of one year." Factually, an earlier complaint had been filed against Davide (and several other justices) during the one-year period.

Notably, after these cases were dismissed, officials, which do not include "plagiarism," the Constitution has not expressly authorized Congress or any other agency to discipline Supreme Court justices. And the only penalty Congress can impose is "removal from office." Any lesser penalty has not been expressly granted the power to penalize Supreme Court members for wrongdoings that are punishable by lesser penalties like suspension, fine or censure.

With Due Respect

Antonio T. Carpio

Non-impeachable officers. In the absence of a law authorizing any office to discipline high court justices for non-impeachable offenses, and for which the penalty is lighter than removal from office, the Supreme Court itself assumed such responsibility. Thus, for the first time in the 100 years of history, on March 22, 2000—in connection with its aim for "failing to discharge on time his substantive duty to act expeditiously and to the best of his ability and competence." It also "harbored fifty percent of the time due him as former Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS)" (Re: Letter of Mr. Justice Vicente V. Mendoza, A.M. No. 379, In Re: 1999 Bar Examinations").

Recently, on Feb. 24, 2009 ("In Re: Emiliano Lerias et al." Mr. Louis C. Biraogo"), it held another high court justice "liable for GRAVE MISCONDUCT for holding a constitutional incompatible office in the Court and ... fined (him) P500,000 to be deducted from his retirement benefits, and disqualified (him from holding) any office or employment in any branch or instrumentality of the government."

In the resolution, this P500,000 penalty is the largest ever been imposed on any official for any administrative offense. But then was not all. In a subsequent resolution, the erring justice was suspended indefinitely from the practice of law.

Please note that in these two landmark decisions, the Court assumed the power to discipline its own members for non-impeachable offenses, in the absence of a constitutional provision or law vesting such power on any other agency. However, in contemplation of authority, the Court recently organized the Committee on Ethics and Ethical Standards per its new "Internal Rules" (A.M. No. 10-4-20-SC, May 4, 2010). Clearly and when so warranted, the Court has shown its capacity to discipline its own.

Under the Rules, the Ethics Committee "shall have the task of preliminarily investigating all complaints involving graft and corruption and related violations of ethical standards, including anonymous complaints, filed against Members of the Court and of submitting findings and recommendations to the en banc."

* * *

Co-independent and co-ordinate. In reaction to my blog, I piece titled "Fear the Supreme Court can help P-Noy," not a few readers asked rhetorically, why should the Supreme Court help P-Noy? Isn't the duty of the Court to check the President, and not to partner him? How can it be independent if it plays "footsies" with him?

The duty of an independent Court is to check the excesses and abuses of the President, not to blur his vision and unleash his programs. The Court's main responsibility is to uphold the Constitution and all laws and treaties consistent with the rights of the people underneath the different flights.

On the other hand, courts are duty-bound to uphold executive actions arising from the presumption of good faith and regularity in the performance of official duty and as a common courtesy to a co-equal and co-ordinate branch of government. Only when there is gross abuse of discretion tantamount to evasion or morally executive action.

There is grave abuse of discretion (1) when an act is done contrary to the Constitution, the law or jurisprudence, or (2) when it is executed arbitrarily, capriciously or whimsically out of malice, ill will or personal bias. The abuse must be "so patent and so gross as to amount to an evasion of a positive duty or to a virtual refusal to perform a duty required by law or where the power is exercised in an arbitrary or despotic manner by reason of passion or hostility."

* * *

Comments are welcome at thelfourthcoequal@gmail.com

Depicting Luisita

At Large

Alexa Jimenez-Garcia

"I HAVE DON'T ask me to defend Hacienda Luisita," was the late President Cory Aquino's statement in an interview with her shortly after she assumed office. At that time, the "Stock Distribution Option" or SDO had just become the most extensive and attention of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP). Critics alleged the alternative of distributing stocks of ownership in the company instead of distributing land in a plantation was crucial precisely to benefit the President's family which owned Hacienda Luisita.

Aquino's defense of the SDO against Cory's assertion Hacienda Luisita and the SDO had enough defenders, and anything she said would have been construed as self-interest and interference. But now P-Noy faces the same situation today. This time, however, the challenge to him is to go indeed, to take sides and to live up to his campaign promise to distribute the hacienda's lands. Some will not be completely happy unless he actually starts handing out land titles to the more than 10,000 CARPers in Luisita.

But what if this isn't what the farm workers truly want? Ethically, overriding the concerns and preferences of the other Cojuangco family members who continue to live from the land and profit from the plantation and have the property vote to the Department of Agrarian Reform for distribution is akin to self-interest—the very problem confronting the people who depend on Luisita for a living.

* * *

WHERE Rodaya and Jose Julio Zubiga represent the supervisory group of Hacienda Luisita Inc. (HLI), the rural filipino among others, the Hacienda Luisita management and the farm workers is the case filed before the Supreme Court, questioning the legality of the DAR order rescinding the SDO and ordering the distribution of land parcels.

Our media group had dinner with them and representatives of Hacienda Luisita the night before they were to appear at the Supreme Court the oral arguments to submit they were to present their case before the justices.

Both groups have been long years working the sugar fields of Luisita, but they managed to earn degrees in agriculture which may have factored in their use to supervisory work. Zubiga is managing a farm of the CDO, explaining that he sees owning shares in the hacienda as a form of investment. "The value of our shares will surely rise since we get over the legal problems," he declares. "If we are able to get investors to set up factories inside the hacienda, then not only will we be able to provide jobs for our people, but we will also see the value of our shares rise."

The land in those barangays inside Luisita was distributed some years ago to some of the workers, mostly to those in the higher ranks, but unable to afford the inputs necessary to turn the land into productive farms, most chose to sell their property and move away. "Half now only a few families have ended up owning the land to those barangays," observes Zubiga.

* * *

AT LU beholden both men, they say, is how the situation in Hacienda Luisita is being painted as a "moral issue" issue when to the workers there it's about real livelihood and real jobs.

This may be the reason the majority of those, in a referendum conducted recently opted for stock distribution over owning parcels of land. Seeing to militant leaders who had some years ago rallied a workers' group to no calling for strike. As days ago, "Where are they now? Where were they when the people were going hungry after they lost their jobs?"

Those people, "stay supporting [the shifted issue]," as they dub them, eventually agitated the workers and have abandoned their vocation after the strike became violent (in the "Luisita Massacre").

But such resentment only rarely got aired in media stories about Luisita. Both workers and Zubiga were on they will talk with the media only about issues which will benefit the farmers. Such as the SDO.

Zubiga recalls a farm worker complaining to him that after a separate subsidy for an absentee was not for days, he was paid for 6 hours, only to wait the entire day without seeing even the chief out of the register.

* * *

WELL, it is true that writing about Hacienda Luisita as a social justice issue is more "sexy" than writing about it simply as a labor dispute, or a question of interpreting the law.

But I guess it's a basic requirement that before we ponder that issue, we should at least first hear from the point of view of those most affected, those who will have to live with the arrangement, the farm workers and their families.

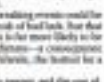
Perhaps those who criticize the plebiscite and the vote of the majority should also ponder that farm workers would cling to the easiest option and the immediate transfer toward rather than land from ability to carve out their future as the world has given them.

But those who can't see past behind the farm workers should perhaps also respect their opinion, and not blur in spite of them, when they are the ones who must live the rest of their lives with the chosen alternative.

Summer of extremes

World View

Stefan Rahmstorf



HELLO—This summer has been one of weather-related extremes in Russia, Pakistan, China. In Japan, the Arctic ice is melting. But does this have anything to do with global warming, and are we in man emissions of climate?

While it cannot be unequivocally proven for this person, for the man's sake, global warming caused any particular extreme event, we can say that global warming very likely makes many kinds of extreme weather both more frequent and more severe.

For Russia, central Russia has been in the grips of an warm-ever heat wave. As a result of drought and heat, more than 500 wildfires have raged out of control, smothering Moscow in smoke and threatening several nuclear facilities. Russia's government has declared a state of emergency, sending aerial grain-spray tanks.

Meanwhile, Pakistan is struggling with unprecedented flooding. In China, flash floods have so far killed more than a thousand people and destroyed more than two million homes. European countries like Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic have also suffered serious flooding.

Meanwhile, global temperatures in recent months have been at their highest levels in records that go back 130 years. Arctic sea ice cover is reached its lowest recorded average level for the month of June ever. In Greenland two huge chunks of ice broke off in July and August.

Are these events connected?

Looking at the long-term, extreme events will not reveal their cause, just like watching a few cards from a casino does not reveal the game. But viewed in a broader context, and using the logic of physics, important parts of the picture can be understood.

This decade has been characterized by a number of stunning extremes. In 2003, the most severe heat wave in living memory broke previous temperature records by a large margin and caused 70,000 deaths in Europe. In 2005, the most severe hurricane season in the Atlantic in the history of records broke New Orleans and broke records in terms of the number and intensity of storms.

In 2007, unprecedented wildfires raged across the last of physics: warm air can hold more moisture. As the earth's degree Celsius warming, 7 percent more water is available to rain down from saturated air masses. Drought risk also increases with warming, even where rainfall does not decline, increased evaporation dries out the soils.

The rather drastic effect you also change the preferred patterns of atmospheric circulation, which can exacerbate extremes of heat, drought, or rainfall in some regions, while reducing them in others. The problem is that a reduction in these extremes is likely to be far smaller than the increase in extremes. Studies of regional climate models provides only modest benefits, whereas the new extremes to which we are not adapted can be devastating, as recent events in Pakistan show.

The events of this summer show how extreme blocked weather patterns can be. Scientists suspect, but what we are now is happening after only 0.8 Celsius of global warming. With swift and decisive action, we can still limit global warming to a total of 2° Celsius or a bit less. Even that much warming would cause unavoidable impacts to which we will have to adapt in terms of sea-level rise, and many ecosystems will be damaged.

But 2° Celsius is the limit we have decided is the tolerable guardrail. Beyond that, we risk setting off a number of tipping elements in the climate system, such as the melting of the Greenland ice sheet, which could lead to several meters of sea-level rise over the next few centuries.

The choice is ours. We can continue business as usual and experience ever more extreme weather, or we can take the path toward a sustainable energy supply. The latter is not only the safer choice, but also the economically smarter one.

* * *

Stefan Rahmstorf is professor of Physics of the Oceans at Potsdam University, and a member of the German Advisory Council on Global Change. His latest book is "The Climate Crisis" (co-written with Hartal Archer).

In the kingdom of the Wiki King

THE HOMILIES were fierce during the 1987 drafting of the Philippine Constitution. In defining state policies for the protection of the family, especially with regard to the unborn child, Catholic conservatives campaigned for wording that would protect the unborn from "the moment of" conception.

It was the word "conception" that proved troublesome for the commissioners. When did this begin? To the absence of a consensus, the commissioners decided to leave it to science, and concluded with what reads now as Section 12. The State shall equally protect the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception.

Method To Madness

Patricia Evangelista

The three words used today formed again by some efforts to decriminalize abortion. The union of the Church claim all abortion is immoral, including the termination of a patently fertilized egg. Advocates of decriminalization and contraception disagree. Former health secretary Alfredo Bengzon, whose administration under Joseph Estrada demanded post-abortion care for all women in government hospitals, says that there is a range of opinion in the medical world defining conception. That spectrum runs the gamut from the implantation of the fertilized egg in the uterus, to the point when organs have been completely formed, to the final stirring of the heart—more than 40 hours after fertilization, to the point when the fetus is viable outside the womb...usually at five months according to a number of doctors. And yet to speak of abortion and contraception demands a basic definition of what conception is.

The number one definition of conception is as follows: the union of the sperm and the ovum, which is synonymous with fertilization, that is the medical definition of conception and that is how I define conception sits in my bill."

This answer to a question that has fired decades of debates comes from Pantaleon Alvarez, Iloilo Galor, "unexplained as one of the best debaters in the house of Representatives" with his opposition to the Cha-cha-cha campaign, impeachment and budget debates," who "has been a consistent awardee as one of the Most Outstanding Congressmen of the country from various magazines and organizations," a man who was a consistent scholar in the 13th Superintendent's List of the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis and in the "undefeated" high hoping champion for four straight years in the United States Naval Academy." The five term congressman "was the first to receive the Tony Sabino Boxing award," and graduated number one in his percent of his Master's degree in Business Administration in the University of the Philippines.

The principal, from Pantaleon is proposing House Bill 13, "An Act Providing for the Safety of the Unborn Child and for Other Purposes."

"The most major element here," he says, "is the definition of conception. What is conception?"

The explanatory note for House Bill 13 promises to extend the "inalienable rights of persons" to "unborn children, basic concepts and the concept of fetal development, 'the fetal and a fertilized."

In his presentation, which he says will be documentary evidence when the stakes his case for House Bill 13 to the House of Representatives, "the moment of conception" is "If a sperm cell fertilizes an egg, it is called a zygote," he says. The fertilization process takes about 24 hours. When fertilization happens, changes occur on the surface of the egg to prevent other sperm from penetrating it. At the moment of fertilization, the genetic makeup is complete, including the sex of the infant."

This definition, he says, "is his medical definition."

House Bill 13 is supported by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines whose representative calls it "a wonderful law," as well as by other pro-life groups.

Galor is understandably proud of his work, which finally offers a definition of conception.

"I went to the internet, to other major medical websites in the internet, Medicinet.com, which defines conception."

The documentarily evidence Galor presents, which he says generously offers to anyone interested, has the following quotation taken as a screenshot from Medicinet.com (We bring document knowledge in you):

"Conception

"(1) The union of the sperm and the ovum. Synonymous with fertilization.

"(2) The onset of pregnancy marked by implantation of the blastocyst into the endometrium.

"(3) A basic conception of a situation or principle. From the Latin *concipio*. Conceptional meaning conception, becoming pregnant, drawing up legal formulae; and from the Latin-*conceptus*, meaning conceiving, pregnancy; collecting or a collection."

The law, he says, "hopes to prevent the systematic abortion of the unborn from the moment of conception through all kinds of substances, (SIC) for example, contraception pills—no, how a number of definitions here in my house bill."

He also provides photographic evidence, an illustration, also from Medicinet.net, from "Conception Versus Blastulation: The Amazing Journey from Egg to Embryo," (link number 3) "Fertilization: Sperm Penetrates Egg," one of 12 online documentations he provides the specific definition used in his presentation.

As an exact "moment of conception" demands a single moment, and although Medicinet.net cuts down provide multiple moments, as the "union of the sperm and the ovum," synonymous to fertilization, seems covered days before "implantation of the blastocyst into the endometrium," it is difficult to understand why the representative chose the first definition and not the second or third.

He assures, after all, also includes emergency contraception, IUDs, diaphragms and even necessary hysterectomies as a long list of banned items. It is admittedly valid granted that Medicinet.net's second definition of the moment of conception is implantation, which should allow emergency contraception and IUDs and anything that prevents implantation.

The representative from the second district of Davao del Norte is to be assuming.

"That's why it's very important to define conception and we have how the definition of conception as defined by the most accepted encyclopedia right now in the world, Wikipedia."

* * *

Brief editorial description of the Pantaleon congressmen's position can be heard on the radio broadcast aired on ABC-5 "Prado: The Witness," Monday at 8:30 p.m.

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TALK of the TOWN

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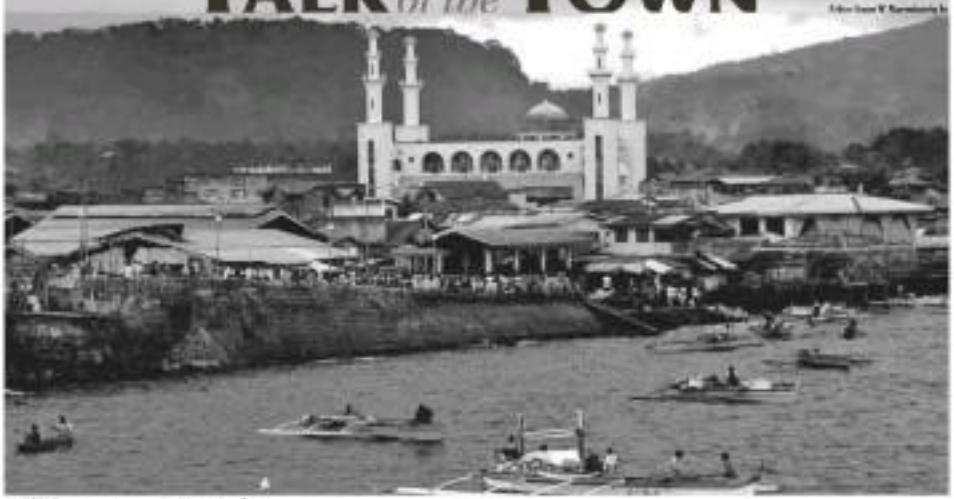
Editor Jason V. Buenaventura Jr.



A MOSQUE towers over houses and buildings in Jolo, Sulu.

MINDANAO QUESTION

Build new development paradigm

By Eduardo Gilbuen Tadem

UCSD J. MALDE'S anti-clo, "Mindanao can be BIMP-land leader" (Talk of the Town, Aug. 31, is a well-meaning attempt at breaking the current political and economic impasse in Mindanao. The problem, however, is that it ends up leaning dumbly to the long-running Manila-imposed strategy of utilizing Mindanao's human and natural resources to benefit non-Mindanaoans.

He ignores the problem of redistribution of wealth and resources, especially between Mindanao-Sulu on one hand, and Metro Manila and other northern regions on the other. Malik labors under the assumption that economic growth is the answer to Mindanao's problems and that the "territorial issue" should be placed on the back burner.

Sustained growth

In closing on his conveniently forgot that sustained economic growth has been taking place in Mindanao all these years.

Between 1999 and 2008, the Mindanao economy grew by 33.7 percent. From 1995 to 2000, Mindanao's average GDP growth rate of 3.69 percent was only slightly less than the national average rate of 3.76 percent. From 2001 to 2007, Mindanao's average growth rate rose to 5.32 percent, with the 2007 growth rate alone reaching at 6.91 percent.

The economic growth generated little or no benefits for the poorer number of Mindanaoans—Moros, Lumads (indigenous peoples) and the Christianized working class. Malvas such a concept, it is not difficult to see why the continual insurgencies in the region remain important.

Food crisis

Malik says the promise of an improving Philippine food economy argue for greater food production in Mindanao. But Mindanao already provides for almost 40 percent of the country's food needs while many in the southern regions go hungry there. Therefore, shouldn't a regional development strategy weather to take care of the basic needs of Mindanao people first before the rest of the country?

The issue, therefore, is "internal colonialism," a problem that has long been highlighted by Bangsamoro separatist groups as the core concern of their struggle.

Contrary to popular belief, economic growth and development have not bypassed the southern regions of the Philippines. A closer look at Mindanao's economic development reveals that far from being isolated from the mainstream of the national economy, the island has been a major performer and a primary contributor to the country's productive capacities.

Listed by vast reserves of natural resources, business concerns have invested capital and technology, and established centers that have generated enormous profits for their owners and executives. But the resulting wealth and incomes have not benefited the greater majority of its people.

Marcos strategy

Poverty and other social indicators point to a more distressed condition for Mindanao (incidents than for the nation as a whole. (See sidebar.)

Under the authoritarian rule of Ferdinand Marcos (1972-1986), Mindanao took on a new importance. Development strategies were formulated in the midst of increasing social tension, rapid depletion of the land frontier, increasing land concentration and agrarian conflicts, and further marginalization and impoverishment especially of the Moro and Lumad peoples.

Compelling factors were the rise of the Moro separatist movements and the inroads made by the communist New People's Army's guerrilla units.

Marcos put in place a massive infrastructure-development program designed to attract big investments by facilitating the transport of goods and people, generate more electric power, and boost agricultural production.

The Philippine state took the lead in investing to export-oriented agribusiness plantations and industrial production, often in partnership with local and foreign entrepreneurs, not to mention Marcos cronies.

Foreign investments, however, fell short of the government-set targets even as they avoided conflict-ridden areas. The result was a skewed development that favored already relatively developed areas such as the Davao region and southern Mindanao provinces.

Resistance

Production for an external market did little to address Mindanao's economic and social problems, resulting instead in the siphoning of the island's resources and wealth to already affluent centers in Luzon, the Visayas and foreign capitals.

There was considerable local resistance to this pattern of development. Even communities and sectors such as peasants, workers, urban poor and the middle class. Such protests were met with iron power, militarization and human rights abuses which only served to fuel the flames of resistance and drove large segments of the population into the Moro separatist movement and the communist guerrillas.

By the 1980s, rebellion and popular resistance had become so widespread that Marcos' development agenda for Mindanao was in serious jeopardy.

By the time the dictator was toppled in a popular uprising in January 1986, Mindanao was in a worse state than in previous decades. Its growth rates had stagnated and industrial advances were insignificant. The few areas of growth were basically of the enclave type of development, e.g., export fruits that had little or no linkages, forward or backward, with the local economy.

Post-Marcos era

Its biggest agricultural sector, the coconut industry, virtually collapsed in the midst of efforts by Marcos cronies to monopolize it and extract billions of pesos of levies forcibly collected from poor coconut farmers. The millions of dollars spent for Marcos' development projects in Mindanao only succeeded in aggravating the poverty situation of Mindanao's people.

The post-Marcos development strategies of Corazon Aquino, Fidel Ramos, Joseph Estrada and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo did not differ essentially from those of the previous decades. The only change was in the character of the Philippine state which had now shaken off its authoritarian cloak and taken on a democratic facade.

Whether those in Aquino's regional industrial centers, Samuel Mindanao Investment Development Authority and Ramos-Estrada-Malaysia-Philippines-Sad-dauay (Growth Area, or Arroyo's "Mindanao National Initiative," the basic premises and principles remained unchanged.

In 2006, Arroyo launched what she called the Super Regional Development Strategy, which divided the country into four super regions with "Agribusiness Mindanao" being one of them. As the name implies, Mindanao is to focus on agribusiness as its "competitive edge," particularly in the cultivation of "high-value crops."

In January 2008, Congress created the Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA) which seeks to accelerate growth and development by establishing a central planning agency for southern Philippines. Echoing Arroyo's initiative, MinDA would focus on agribusiness as a major area for economic development.

It is doubtful, however, whether Mindanao's hope lies in agribusiness, which, at present, already occupies a central place in the island's economy. Agribusiness activities have caused many problems than solutions for Mindanao's people, through environmental degradation, human rights violations, corruption, health problems and wealth transfer.

Integration

Mindanao development continues to be driven by the Philippine state's objective of integrating the southern economy into the national mainstream with little or no regard for the actual needs of Mindanao's peoples. The focus is on attracting investments to export-led and market-driven growth industries.

The aim is to open up more of Mindanao's natural resources or exploitation and extraction with big foreign and local business interests as the prime movers. Little, however, is done to directly address issues of poverty and inequality which are the principal causes of social unrest and rebellion.

Development planners naively hope that investment benefits will "trickle down" to the rest of the population.

As to the Bikman issues, hundreds of millions of dollars have poured into Mindanao in the form of business investments and foreign aid. Yet the Davao research group, the Mindanao Bureau for Research in Mindanao, noted that development projects in the post-authoritarian period continually fail to address the "inequitable distribution of land, continued siphoning off of the island's wealth by big business, disregard for indigenous people's rights and government lack of vision."

Muslim Mindanao

In Muslim Mindanao, development agenda created in the wake of the 1996 peace agreement have floundered due to lack of funds, corruption, weak mandate and traditional politics. The Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) is deprived of meaningful autonomy and has little control over its own affairs.

Due to the ongoing armed conflicts, economic development programs have been on a standstill, with most government and foreign funds going to relief and emergency assistance and rehabilitation.

The implementation of the P30 million multidonor Mindanao Trust Fund-Reconstruction and Development Program still awaits the signing of a final peace agreement between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Manila government.

The relentless economic exploitation of Mindanao since the turn of the 20th century has produced enormous side wealth and riches for a few mostly non-Bikman business firms and individuals, but it has also generated poverty and social marginalization for its working population, whether Moro, Lumad or working class Christian settlers.

Furthermore, its natural resources are being depleted at an unconscionable pace, robbing from of an ecological backlash.

Internal colonialism

Internal colonialism is reflected in the phenomenon of regional transfers of wealth from less developed areas to national centers of political and economic power. This is clearly evident in the Mindanao case. The data show how large volumes of capital from Mindanao are shipped to Cebu and Manila and finished products caught in Mindanao waters are unloaded in Manila and Subic ports.

Corporations (including TNCs) with production operations in Mindanao usually have their main offices in Metro Manila. Thus, they pay taxes in Manila and deprive provincial and municipal governments of revenue.

Internal colonialism would explain why, despite the presence of massive government projects and highly profitable industries, the Mindanao region remains poor and deprived.

In the meantime, the Manila government is bent on secretly selling the same age-old patterns of inequitable growth that have long deprived Mindanaoans of their just share of the economic surplus. The country's leaders must initiate a process of constructing a new development paradigm for Mindanao that will finally resolve into Mindanao's peoples social and economic justice.

The grim alternative will be the continuation of the cycle of violence and mayhem that have long characterized southern Philippines.

(Eduardo Gilbuen Tadem, Ph.D., is professor of Asian Studies at the University of the Philippines Diliman. He is currently a visiting researcher at the Kyoto University Center for Southeast Asian Studies. This essay is excerpted from three of his previous studies: "The Political Economy of Mindanao: An Overview" in Mark Turner, et al., Mindanao: Land of Unfulfilled Promise (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1992); "Mindanao: Bridging Region" (2007), a research report submitted to the Ateneo Foundation; and "Development and Distress in Mindanao: A Political Economy Overview," OP Forum (Vol. 11, No. 1) Jan-Feb 2008.)

Low HDI

THERE the United Nations Development Program's human development index (HDI), Mindanao provinces (and) badly compared with other Philippine provinces. Mindanao's average HDI was only 0.619 in 2003, or 15 points lower than the national HDI of 0.767.

Seventeen out of 24 Mindanao provinces were in the bottom half of the national list. Worse, 9 of the bottom 10 provinces were all in Mindanao.

Mindanao's per capita income of $1,386 is a mere 41 percent of the national per capita income of $3,389. Furthermore, 8 Mindanao provinces occupy the last 8 places among the 77 provinces of the country and 12 of the last 14 places. Four of the 12 lowly ranked provinces are all part of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Poverty incidence in Mindanao is consistent with the island's low standing in the national HDI. Its average poverty incidence of 42.4 percent in 2003 was 40 percent higher than the national average of 21.7 percent.

Six Mindanao provinces had poverty incidences greater than 50 percent: Sulu (88.8 percent), Tawi-Tawi (69.8 percent), Basilan (63.6 percent), Zamboanga del Norte (63.1 percent), Maguindanao (58.8 percent), and Siquijor (54.9 percent).

Another seven provinces had poverty rates of between 40 percent and 47 percent in 2003.

Between 2000 and 2003, 11 Mindanao provinces experienced deterioration in their poverty situation. Double-digit increases in poverty were registered by Maguindanao, Surigao del Sur, Davao Oriental, Zamboanga del Norte and Surigao del Norte.

Inequality measures for Mindanao reflect wide disparities in income distribution and consumption patterns among its population. Its 2003 average Gini index of 45.8 represented a decline from the 2000 index of 46.4 points.

Eduardo Gilbuen Tadem

Across the NATION

Church groups to probe Aurora freeport

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—The social effects of the Aurora Pacific Economic Zone and Freeport (Apeco), which is being primed as the third biggest in the country, will be looked into by a national fact-finding mission to be led by the National Council of Churches in the Philippines on Aug. 24 to 28.

The mission seeks to determine the impact of Apeco on the lives of Dumagat farmers and fishermen, according to Fr. Joefran Tabalno, parish priest of Dingalan, Aurora.

Spanning almost 13,000 hectares of land straddling the villages of Dibet, Paleves, San Ildefonso, Cozo and Cabog in Casiguran, Apeco remains mired in the mire in the Clark Freeport and Economic Zone in Mampangas and Subic, and the Subic Bay Freeport in Batasn and Zambales.

Clark comprises 4,000 ha of the main zone territory and 27,000 ha of sub-zone territory while Subic is comprised of 15,000 ha of land and 11,000 ha of water territory.

Apeco's development was approved by Congress in 2007 through Republic Act 9490, and was expanded further by Ed. 10020 in April.

Sen. Edgardo Angara and Rep. Juan de Dios Pelayo Angara, authored the laws creating Apeco.

The fact finding mission would be composed of church-based groups such as the Promotion of Church Peoples' Response (PCPR), Discernment Group of the Roman Catholic Church, the Iglesia Ni Cristo Action Group of Aurora, Pentib Pamoral Ground-Aurora Selena de Salvacion, the Dagatang Gintubdan para sa Buhay (Dadalupan), Ilo Valor sa Kinabuhi, the Kalipunan ng Kilusang Kalusan sa Pilipinas (KKPP) and the Bangsamoro Human rights assembling.

Vitaliano Zubiaki, Apeco chair and administrator, did not reply when the inquirer asked for comments.

Rep. Angara said he expects a fair assessment from the mission. "I hope it's done with a view of having positive outcomes, taking into account the welfare of residents," Angara said in a text message.

"We hope there is an open mind and receptiveness to new ideas to develop what was once a remote, inaccessible and economically underdeveloped area," he said.

Angara also asked the churches and non-government groups participating in the mission to "also fight for people's economic and social rights."

The law expanding Apeco said the economic zone will be "developed into and operated as a decentralized, self-reliant and self-sustaining industrial, commercial, banking, agro-industrial, tourist, financial, financial and investment center with suitable residential areas."

Apeco evolved from the Aurora Special Economic Zone Authority (Aurez), which takes credit for the building of 11 bridges and a major road in northern Aurora, according to Angara.

He said the P600 million earmarked for Apeco in 2010 has not been released yet. Rosette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon

MILF leader in Lanao attacks yields

KOLAMBUGAN, Lanao del Norte—A Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) sub-commander who figured in the Aug. 18, 2008 atrocities here and in other parts of the province, had reportedly yielded to the military.

Lt. Col. Ferdinand Bautista, commander of the Army's 103rd Infantry Battalion, confirmed on Friday the surrender of Mustafah Alonto.

Bautista said Alonto, alias Ahkmad Tik-I, was part of the MILF group under Abdullah Macapaar, which raided villages here and in nearby towns during that year.

More than a dozen people were killed in the attacks that also displaced tens of thousands of civilians.

The rampage was triggered by a number of issues, including the government's dilly-dallying in signing the controversial memorandum of agreement on ancestral domain (MOA-AD).

The MOA-AD, which would have given the MILF a larger area of control under an autonomous setup, was subsequently trashed by the Supreme Court for being unconstitutional.

Alonto has reportedly pledged to the government, bringing along with him two Garand rifles, an M16 armalite rifle and a caliber .45 pistol, Bautista said without saying when the surrender took place.

Bautista said during talks with officials, the MILF sub-leader has offered to help in the filing of charges against another perpetrator of the 2008 attacks.

"He is willing to become a state witness against the leader of the group involved in the attacks," he said.

But Bautista said it was up to the government to study Alonto's offer.

He said while the government was studying the rebel leader's offer to turn state witness, the charges against him continue.

He stood as sentinel enough that the military which has custody of Alonto's rifle arms would second the rebel leader his constitutional rights.

"I assure the loved ones of Mustafah (Alonto) said other would-be surrenderers a respect from the troopers of their dignity and human rights as all times," Bautista said. Tito Pal, Inquirer Mindanao

Small town girl makes waves in Asian chess

By Johanna Nardoo
Inquirer Northern Luzon

ROSALES, Pangasinan—At 11, Annamelia Cle Revina has achieved more than most people would in their lifetime.

Not only is she the embodiment of her dive since kindergarten, fifth grader Annamelia also keeps a gold medal from the 11th Asian Age Group Chess Championships held in Subic in June, beating opponents from nine other Southeast Asian countries.

This new honor increased her haul to 21 medals—three golds from the 2007, 2008 and 2009 Asean chess championships, 16 silvers and seven bronzes—three contests she entered since the 5-year-old started playing chess.

Plus Segun as a diversion when she was taught by her father, Jimmy, to play chess when she was 3, it is now a source of pride for her school, Rosales North Central School, a public school of more than 900 students.

"We are very proud to count an international chess winner among our students," says acting principal Consuelo Guevarra.

Revina attributes her accomplishments to hard work, training and a generous amount of prayer.

"I wake up at 5:30 every day but I also make time for my studies," says Revina, who is ranked in her academic subjects by her teacher, Gloria, a teacher in her school.

Revina spends an hour and a half on weekdays practicing the game and seven hours on weekends with the guidance of her trainer, Michael Carbo.

Dressing of nine-day training sessions, lawyer, she makes sure to brush up on her school work even with her hectic training schedule.

"Playing chess is just a way for me to de-brain in my studies. When I go to college I want to play for the college varsity team," she says.

SAMAHAN NI Revina faces an older opponent during a chess tournament held in Lingayen, Pangasinan.

It makes Revina happy to bring honor to her country and to her school, but she is not quite as happy as her father, who is a self-professed chess fanatic.

"I grew up wanting to join chess competitions but I never

"Playing chess is just a way for me to de-brain in my studies. When I go to college I want to play for the college varsity team," she says.

It makes Revina happy to bring honor to her country and to her school, but she is not quite as happy as her father, who is a self-professed chess fanatic.

"I grew up wanting to join chess competitions but I never

Bulacan to lift quarry suspension

HORNACAYAC, Bulacan—The provincial government has ordered the lifting tomorrow of a suspension on quarry and mining operations but would investigate administrative trails by sponsors that they may have participated to grab which caused local quarry owners to sob.

Governor Wilhelmino Sy-Alvarado made the announcement on the day-after meeting with officers and members of the Mabilo Association of the Philippines (MAP) in Mabilo City.

Sy-Alvarado said he is allowing MAP members to continue operations only for a month to give the provincial government time to study how it would improve regulations.

On July 6, six days after Sy-Alvarado took his oath of office, he issued Executive Order No. 1 suspending quarry and mining operations in the province.

The suspension caused the retrenchment of more than a hundred quarry workers, said Ramon Bhanot, committee of Masonite Aggregates which operates in Angat town. He said the firm had to cease gravel and sand shipments to Metro Manila, Pampanga and Western Bulacan as well.

At the meeting, Sy-Alvarado expressed dismay that Bulacan had been earning only P15 million annually from the mines. He said this was one of the reasons for the suspension.

Revenue

"Dinaan na nila ang ating yaman eh, ang ating kabuhayan pagkatapos nada ng ang naiiwan sa atin ng mga ganid. [They have been destroying our resources and consuming our wealth but yet we don't earn enough taxes. That is not right and it should stop]," he said.

The governor's promise is equivalent to 10 days' worth of profits from Pampanga quarries, he said.

At the meeting, many MAP members complained that quarry firms under export limit income by recycling delivery receipts (DR), which enables them to provincial regulators more than they were shipping out their daily production.

But during a separate tour with reporters in the aftermath of the meeting, Sy-Alvarado said he has ordered the Bureau of Mines and Geo-Sciences (BMG) to conduct the inspection of the shipping documents at the firms' only means of reserving money to pay police officials and Department of Environment and Natural Resources employees who allegedly extort fees before allowing quarry trucks through the highways.

"Dati nawawala na ito but for some reason, dinadali ito (The practice of under-reporting revenues by recycling delivery receipts stopped but for some reason it has resurrected)," he said.

According to other sources, firms pay P5,000 to P5,500 to some groups for each truckload of material, and the rate of extracted money rises according to the roadside shipment's destination. Fernando Repuyan Jr., Inquirer Central Luzon

Rise in dengue cases in E. Visayas 'scary'—Ona

By Carla P. Gomez, Jani Arnaiz and Jaco Cabiles
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—Health Secretary Enrique Ona said the enormous increase in dengue cases by 65.6 percent this year is under control, but the rise of cases by one a thousand percent in Eastern Visayas was "very scary."

He said that while dengue cases this year have increased to 49,739 or 83.8 percent from 29,800 last year nationwide, the rise in the number of deaths has been minimal, from 315 in 2009 to 387 this year.

"But that does not mean we are relaxing this fight[; we are using our best to assist local governments in the fight against dengue," Ona said here Friday.

Ona was in Tacloban City to assess the situation in the city and Negros Occidental, noting there are some areas in the province where dengue cases have reached outbreak levels.

Ona said he has been going around the country to reassure the public that dengue is under control and that the DOH knows what is happening and is doing what should be done to control the mosquito-borne disease.

DOH figures provided by Ona showed that Eastern Visayas topped the list of dengue cases reported in the 17 regions of the country this year.

Eastern Visayas reported 5,419 cases or an increase by 1409.5 percent over last year, followed by Mimaropa – 572 or 338 percent, Northern Mindanao – 3,591 or 351.6 percent, ARMM (Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao) — 618 or 1,000 percent, Caraga Region – 1,663 or 180.9 percent, Soccsksargen – 3,187 or 340.6 percent, CAR (Cordillera Administrative Region) – 1,032 or 134.6 percent, Davao Region – 4,327 or 204.9 percent, Zamboanga Peninsula – 2,041 or 103.5 percent, Western Visayas – 3,922 or 83.6 percent, Calabarzon – 5,005 or 38.4 percent, Bicol Region – 362 or 16.5 percent, Central Visayas – 1,346 or 9 percent, Ilocos Region – 2,148 or 38.4 percent, MIMAROPA (Mindoro and Capital Region) – 3,784 or 16.3 percent, and Cagayan Valley – 805 or 40.6 percent.

Imminent danger

The Bacolod city council Wednesday declared an imminent danger of epidemic in the city due to the rising cases of dengue fever.

Mayor Evelio Leonardia made the request for the resolution as a preventive measure, since the incidence of dengue fever in the city is on the increase. It bears rising since the start of the rainy season.

In his letter dated Aug. 18 to Vice Mayor Jude Thaddeus Sayson and the city council, Leonardia said that based on the report of the City Health Office, the incidence of dengue fever has increased by 32 percent compared to last year.

Meanwhile, the number of dengue fever cases in Eastern Visayas is now on the decline but health officials remained cautious as they urged the communities to keep their surroundings clean.

"We have observed that our dengue fever cases in the region are now on the decline, but we should not let our guard down considering that the dengue fever is a common disease in the region," Department of Health regional health assistant nurse Boyd Cura said on Tuesday.

Cura said that as of this week, only 67 new cases of dengue fever were monitored by their office across the region, lower than the 3,952 cases reported last month.

In Southern Leyte, the dengue fever cases from January to July reached 200, according to Provincial Health officer I Noel Lumiao, head of the technical division of the Salvacion Espina Provincial Memorial Hospital (SEPMH).

Pre-paid electricity to be tested in Baguio in 2011

BAGUIO CITY—Pre-paid electricity meters will be tested in this city next year, an option now being taken by the local power utility to make the system more efficient.

Gerardo Serrano, general manager of the Benguet Electric Cooperative (Benecos), said pre-paid electricity consumption would reduce systems loss and guarantee profits for consumers, who partly own the power utility.

"Serrano, a cooperative, earns more before a household consumes its electricity for the month because the power has already been paid for," Serrano said.

The pre-paid meters are activated by swipe cards, allowing households to access electricity provided by main power lines. A card can also represent a household's average electric consumption for a month.

The Energy Regulatory Commission has issued rules governing pre-paid electricity charges, Serrano said.

But the utility must first test the technology's one major obstacle—each meter costs P5,000, requiring Benecos P580 million to buy 1,20,000 units for all its member-consumers should it be used by all households, said Melchor Liedan, head of Benecos's engineering department.

Benecos subsidizes the cost of installing meters, but Serrano said the utility could ask investor households to buy the meters themselves.

Dinawan was the first consumer to test pre-paid electricity consumption in 2000, although studies showed that its management by the Dalwasi Electric Cooperative (Dalcoo) needed retooling, said Liedan.

The Leyte Electric Cooperative II (Leyeco II) has been recommended to using pre-paid meters, he said.

Alejandro de los Santos, chief of Benecos's corporate services division, said representatives of Leyte's power utility are sharing their mechanisms this month to help Benecos draft an operating system for its units.

De los Santos said the utility plans to develop the system first in Barangay Alapang in La Trinidad, Benguet, where Benecos's main offices are located.

Benecos is also looking for new technology that would help its energy management and conservation drives, and is considering tapping students for ideas. Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

INQUIRER Mindanao

Editor Jam Barandayrel
Bureau Chief Nino B. Alcantara

Mayor vows to lead dev't takeoff of town

By Ryan D. Rosauro
and Richel V. Umel
Kauswagan, Lanao del Norte

A PILOT-TURNED-MAYOR has vowed to lead the development takeoff of war-torn Kauswagan town in Lanao del Norte.

Mayor Rommel Arnado considers the significance of "an economic navigational plan" from which to steer his town toward progress. Success would need a firm determination to undertake the journey, no matter what it costs, he says.

On Aug. 15, Kauswagan marked its second year of moving on since heavy fighting between government and Moro rebel forces resumed following the botched Sanctuary deal with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in 2000.

Ten years earlier, the town saw the first valley of shots that led to then President Joseph Estrada's infamous declaration of an "all-out war" against the MILF. From the place, he also announced an aggressive military campaign following the rebels' occupation of its town hall.

In the 1970s, it was in Kauswagan where the initial clashes that ignited the war between the government and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) occurred. The MILF grew as a breakaway faction from the MNLF.

"Thus, it is not surprising that the town has languished in underdevelopment. Efforts to provide stable livelihood to its people are constantly disturbed by sudden evacuations to safe places to avoid a crossfire.

Mayor Arnado, 32, is confident that the good prospects of a restart of peace negotiations between the government and the MILF would provide the "enabling" environment for the local government's development initiatives.

Peace commission

Skirmishes and tension also arise out of "rido" (clan war) and the religious divide between Muslims and Christians—a vestige of the 1970s that surfaces whenever the MILF and the government are in conflict.

This is the reason Arnado is setting up a peace commission composed of elders of ethnic and religious groups in the town. He stresses that the hundreds of progress he envisions in the harmonious environment, not autocracy, of parties in conflict in the communities.

During his inaugural address on June 30, Arnado himself introduced the band of reconciliators to his inaugural rivals, urging them to forget their political feud and "unite to build a new beginning."

Arnado also urged the people to participate fully in ending a corrosive goal for community development and defining what they expect from the local government to serve their collective interest. The local leadership would oversee the formulation of a common goal and give concrete support to achieve it, he said.

First 100 days

Angel Estrella, a resident, said the people should feel the city hasn't to support the mayor because his election is an embodiment of their own aspiration to move forward.

Immediately upon assuming office, Arnado appealed to businessmen and taxpayers to pay the correct taxes promptly to help the local government overcome collection setbacks and enhance its capacity to deliver services and ensure livelihood opportunities, especially for women.

Concerned about the need to prevent Kauswagan's remaining upland and coastal resources, Arnado is reviewing municipal programs and policies that may affect sound ecological management. In particular, he is looking into the Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan and the extent of its implementation.

His administration is pushing for eco-tourism development, especially in beaches for dolphin watching.

WORLD Food Program Project Director Susan Robertson and Mayor Rommel Arnado visit the rubbish fishnet project in Kauswagan, Lanao del Norte. WFP commits food for work assistance for the Suburbak alternative when MILF rebels attacked in the coastal barangays of Lapayan and Tacub. NATIONE MAGALONG

A CHILD stands in front of the ruins of a road conflict two years after Moro Islamic Liberation Front rebels attacked Kauswagan.

In the northern town, Arnado plans to build a public market and town terminal so the town's business district can expand, creating new commercial opportunities.

Dreams

The son of former mayor Shahbin Arnado, he grew up in Kauswagan amid its sorry socioeconomic and political conditions. On a dream to reach the skies, Arnado studied to become a pilot.

For some time, he flew to the United States. In the Philippines, he worked for the Philippine Jetcon Corp. and the Sta. San Isidro Farm Products as a pilot.

Now, he steers four-seater planes.

Turtle Islands: Hundreds of nautical miles away from justice

By Dennis Mallawang
Inquirer.net

TURTLE ISLANDS, Tawi-Tawi—They came in the dead of night and pulled off the first heist on Bagsan Island this year. The thieves, possibly armed, quietly left on board a boat taking about 600 pieces of green turtle eggs in this protected wildlife sanctuary 1,000 kilometers southwest of Manila.

"They ransacked six nests," said Orlan Mallawang, Sea Turtle Corridor staff of the nongovernment Conservation International Philippines. A nest can contain from 40 to 140 eggs of the endangered mammal.

For CI-Philippines, every egg is essential in the global bid to reverse a steady population decline of green turtles (*Chelonia mydas*). There is no clear estimate of its population but the International Union for the Conservation of Nature said its number could have dropped by more than 50 percent over the past decade.

Human encroachment and destruction of habitat, meat and egg trade, domestic and industrial pollution and commercial fishing are among the major threats to the species' existence.

Eggs theft

In Turtle Islands, eggs theft is common. But in this Tawi-Tawi municipality, many, if not all, wildlife crimes are resolved or simply settled out of court.

Turtle Islands police chief Inspector Jingle Ibrahim Mana attributed this to the lack of prosecutor's office and court in the municipality. On Tagumpay Island, the seat of municipal government, there is no detention facility.

Environmental lawyer Igan Lucas agreed. "Its geographic distance to any court is the main issue. Hundreds of thousands in fuel alone would be spent to take someone who is arrested back to Bongao to prosecute," she said.

Bringing the case to the Tawi-Tawi capital of Bongao will require prosecutors to levy suspected wildlife offenders on board a passenger vessel, whose weekly trips are rescheduled. It takes about 14 hours to reach Bongao from Tagumpay.

"That's why cases like eggs robbery are simply settled here amicably," Mana said.

Environmental crimes

Egg poaching is just one of the most common environmental offenses in Turtle Islands. Illegal fishing abound, posing grave threats to its already fragile marine ecology.

From 2005 to 2009, the Philippine Navy recorded 571 cases of illegal fishing—both by local and foreign fishermen—in the municipal waters, according to its confidential report obtained by Inquirer.net.

Law enforcers feel helpless.

"We don't even have a single patrol boat here," said Turtle Islands Coast Guard chief Petty Officer 1 Benny Olivarez.

The Philippine Navy has no outpost also in Tagumpay. But like the police and the Coast Guard, it too has no vessel to chase poachers and illegal fishers. A Navy ship from Zamboanga City and Bongao does rescue patrol only once a month, said officials.

Turtle Islands, where the Philippines shares a porous border with Malaysia, has a combined land and sea area of 158,337 hectares. Its six islands, which have an aggregate area of 368 hectares, are at least near to over 28 nautical miles apart.

Foreign poachers

Most rampant (Malaysian nets for fishing boat) used for illegal fishing in the protected waters of Turtle Islands come from the Sulub city of Semporna, about 23 nautical miles from Tagumpay.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Bandsat Conservation Project has reported that around 100 rampant operate daily in the Turtle Islands Wildlife Sanctuary.

"These boats drag large nets along the bottom, catching whatever gets in their way. Sometimes, sea turtles are trapped in the nets. Since turtles are air-breathing reptiles, they drown if they are trapped for several hours," the PO3 said.

On July 17, police caught a Malaysian-registered fishing boat off Bagsan Island. It was carrying 13 Sabahnese and tanks of homemade dynamite. The men were held in police custody in Tagumpay and Mana said they would be charged for destructive fishing, a violation of Republic Act No. 8550.

The Malaysian media reported the arrest and Sabah authorities vowed to investigate the incident, including a claim the 13 were kidnapped and then held in Tagumpay.

Four days later, all the illegal fishing suspects were freed and Turtle Islands authorities said they were not pressing charges.

"In doing so, perhaps the relations between Sandakan and Tagumpay will be better again," Mana said.

Special, historical ties

Turtle Islands officials are too careful not to hurt the town's special and historical ties with Sabah, where the Philippines' dictator Ferdinand Marcos had in several occasions caused diplomatic tensions.

The more than 8,000 population of this fishing town rely largely on Sandakan market to sell their daily catch. Islanders who are not owned or get long-standing sea of marine turtles in the world, the DENR said.

Turtle Islands produces up to two million turtle eggs annually, according to the DENR's Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau.

In 2009, six turtles laid about one million eggs on the shores of Bagsan alone, said Jennifer Seang, one of the four wildlife monitoring rangers stationed on the island.

That makes Bagsan Island attractive to wildlife thieves.

Seeing the need to beef up security, two members of the Philippine Marines and two from the Coast Guard have been deployed there. Two members of the Philippine National Police-Maritime Group are also set to arrive to augment Bagsan's security force.

"It is important that armed forces are stationed on the island," said Mallawang. "Poachers are also normally armed."

'Justice on Sails'

To better address wildlife crimes in the Turtle Islands Wildlife Sanctuary, capacity building is necessary, said Lucas, legal consultant of CI-Philippines.

"Arresting teams under such training and experience in evidence gathering and preservation so the law does it gets to Bongao for prosecution, the evidence is thin or has been thrown overboard in the long trip," she said.

Establishing a court and a prosecutor's office in Tagumpay is necessary, especially during nesting season, Lucas said.

The "Justice on Wheels" project of the Supreme Court may be applicable in Turtle Islands, but only if there are already cases and the dockets are full. Right now, no cases are filed at all due to the distance," she said.

Lucas said the high reward bait to recognize that the lack of cases or inability to file "is not an indication of lack of violations and unplugging dockets are not the only indicators of justice denied."

"Tagumpay and other remote areas, where environmental law violations are rampant, need a trip to deliver justice despite being a day of travel and hundreds of thousands in fuel cost away from any court."

TURTLE EGGS are tended in this hatchery on Bikman Island, one of the islands in the protected Turtle Islands. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources maintains this hatchery. STORY

RENE'MARCO reported an all-time high in June—$7.82 billion—the highest monthly remittances ever recorded.

—Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Amando Tetangco Jr.

GLOBAL Pinoy

Gilda Monica Feria

This section is dedicated to Filipinos overseas toiling on land and at sea, in factories, in construction sites and in the homes of the world to secure a better life for their families. These are their stories.

BAY AREA SUBURB Suisun City (pronounced soh-soon), between San Francisco and Sacramento in California, is a community of about 27,000 residents, and boasts of a beautiful waterfront area.

Fil-Am Pete Sanchez seeks second term as Suisun City mayor

By Ed Yu
Inquirer.net

SUISUN CITY, California, United States—First-term Mayor Pete Sanchez takes pride in the way his city has weathered the current economic crisis: a stable budget and no layoffs, furloughs, or cuts in basic services.

In fact, Suisun is probably one of the few cities in Solano County, if not in most of California, that has managed to keep a balanced budget at a time when most officials are overcoming financial ills.

His supporters have asked Sanchez to seek a second term, and the soft-spoken Filipino-American is heeding that call.

Accepted as Final Exception

Steered through many years as an accountant and auditor, Sanchez has a simple formula for success: operating only what the city collects can afford.

"My city is spread only what are reasonably expect to collect in revenues," he told FilAm Star in an interview. "We consolidate staff responsibilities instead of hiring new staff when someone retires or resigns."

So when the public works director resigned, he did not fill the position, knowing that there's just enough work coverage going on. Instead, he hired part-time professional engineers only when they were needed.

When the city's risk manager resigned, he distributed his duties to other managers. And when the Parks and Recreation manager retired, the city did not immediately fill up the vacancy.

"Hmm, we re-hired the Parks and Recreation manager on a part-time basis, working for us as consultant, minus the benefits," he said.

Looking back at the first four years of his term, Sanchez thinks he and the current members of the City Council have done fairly well.

"Businesses have moved to Suisun, new business buildings were built, the streets and roads have improved, and the city's finances have remained stable," he said.

He gave credit to the full cooperation of the council members and local community leaders, adding that such teamwork has paid off handsomely for the city and its residents.

This year, Mayor Sanchez was tapped to serve as chairman of the Board of Directors of the Solano Transportation Authority (STA). The transportation agency was created in 1990 and is responsible for managing the countywide public transport system that covers the cities of Benicia, Dixon, Fairfield, Rio Vista, Suisun City, Vacaville, and Vallejo.

Throughout his term as mayor recently as chair of STA, many observed that Sanchez has remained a "non-political" mayor.

"I chose to be low profile in my role as mayor because I know that Suisun City residents prefer results over pomp and pageantry," he said. "The only time they read about me in the papers is when I report on my lobbying efforts in Washington DC or in Sacramento, or when we announce news about a new business coming to Suisun."

With a stellar background as a Solano County auditor and appraiser, working under the Solano County Assessor's Office in Fairfield, California, Sanchez retired in 2006 to fulfill his promise to become a full-time mayor after his election.

He served as a Suisun City councilor for 12 years before he got elected as mayor.

A certified public accountant, Sanchez graduated from the University of the East in Manila. He worked with Banco Filipino and Central Bank of the Philippines before immigrating in 1980.

With his solid accounting and auditing background, 10-year stint in the city council, and a common sense approach in any problem that may crop up, Sanchez feels being mayor is a really easy job.

"I love serving people, that is why I find it very being mayor," he said. "I look forward to getting my report cards from Suisun City residents on Nov. 2. And I am certain they will approve of my established performance, my low key but effective leadership. (FilAm Star)

MAYOR Pete Sanchez, FilAm certified public accountant

A graduate of the University of the East, he worked with Banco Filipino and the central bank before migrating to California in the '80s

Women's network marks glass-ceiling breakthroughs

By Liza Gutierrez
Contributor

SAN FRANCISCO—Organization-image specialist Marily Mondejar was doing a pretty good job consulting for a major eyewitness here several years ago. Her boss had been tasked to dig up dirt on the incumbent administration. One of the sitting mayor's appointees had allegedly signed a construction contract for a crony. The media had a feeding frenzy that threatened to topple the Democrat.

"The name of the official sounded foreign," she says, recalling the episode. "After further research, I found out she was a Filipina and I began to wonder why she was being hung out to dry."

The mayor would be reelected, but at the end of the job of this Filipina official, Mondejar was appalled, not because her candidate lost, but because she felt the official had been chosen under the ban to endorse the re-election's image. She ended a contract her requested ownership she has.

"Very few came to her defense," Mondejar says.

A support group

Years, it became the mission of the Filipina Women's Network (FWN), a volunteer, non-profit organization to "level the professional and business playing field for Filipinas across America."

FWN was conceived in 2009, over lunch organized by Cora Valdez, then chief executive officer of one of America's biggest health care providers, Healthnet. Many in her circle of friends were in management positions themselves—Mondejar, who had taken on image-consultancy work for a giant Mexican restaurant chain; and Vera Tiedemann, then a college student.

Theologue was FWN's first president but when she moved to Oregon in 2003, Mondejar took over.

"My tweet is open doors," says Mondejar, 58. "We want to let America know that Filipinos have the skills to compete at all levels in all areas." She related Filipinas who had proven their mettle in the upper reaches of the different branches of government as well as the private sector.

Successful women

Today FWN has some 800 active members. Its successes also be gleaned in the names of more than 400 people who have signified their intention to attend the 7th Filipina Leadership Summit in Las Vegas in October. Among them: former White House physician, retired Rear Adm. Connie Mariano; California Appeals Court Judge Tani Gorre; Cantil-Sakauye, who has been nominated by California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger to be Chief Justice of the state Supreme Court; California Lt. Gov. Maria Shapiri; Nevada Judge Cheryl Moss; Davis, California Mayor Dr. Ruth Asmundson; and information technology guru Zenny Cervantes.

Over the years, FWN has been smothered with such social issues as domestic violence. Mondejar and major republicans for women seeking to move their careers forward are issues at home, particularly violence inflicted by spouses or partners.

It is an issue close to Mondejar's heart, having herself been a victim of domestic violence. In fact, the reason she came to America in 1980 was to seek a divorce from her abusive husband. Her tale of woe is typical. When she told her friends about what her husband was doing to her, she would be told: "It is your fate," and "Try not to make him angry."

Marily's own struggle

She initially brought her two sons to the US, but since she could not afford to support them yet, she brought them back home to live with her mother for a few years as well. She became financially stable. She recalls the pain the divorce inflicted on her children, one of whom blamed her for not sticking it out. She says it took some doing to make them understand. Now she says she has "a great relationship" with them.

In California, Mondejar found her feet. She got bachelor's and master's degrees in Human Resources and in Organizational Psychology. After 13 years as an image builder for the careers corporate she eventually resigned to run FWN as a full-time success.

It is important for women, Mondejar says, to understand the cycle of domestic violence. "It took me years to understand that," she adds. "I kept getting into abusive situations and did not know how to break the cycle and seek help."

FWN has also become known for its women's rights activities as part of its business networking agenda. Its most popular program is its adoption of "The Vagina Monologues," the off-Broadway stage phenomenon going into its 15th year, whose theme—the vagina as a tool for female empowerment—has become a rallying point of women the world over. It has been translated into 45 languages and values its Tagalog version, "Tinagang Puki," was staged in Manila in 2013, church groups soured a fund, which helped execute its success, she said.

FWN will present it again during its Vegas summit in October, which is financially Volunteer Rosemarie Hinrich.

FWN itself does not provide logistical support for abuse victims. What it offers is education and moral support.

For instance, FWN members were at the murder trial of William Corpuz, who was convicted by a jury of murder for slicing his wife's throat.

Mondejar says she is also marshalling her members to support the condemnation of Carol Sakauye, who would, if elected in November, be the first Asian-American Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court. Sakauye is a non-FWN member.

Not mail-order brides

Despite the number of high-caliber women in FWN's roster, Mondejar acknowledges that Filipinas have a long way to go in breaking the glass ceiling.

Google "Filipina" and most of the 1.77 million results are links to matchmaking dating and adult-entertainment sites.

"Initially, American men thought we were some kind of mail-order bride organization and we would get requests to meet Filipina women," Mondejar says in fact, she adds, "many mail-order bride and matchmaking groups still link to our website and we would have to back-trace them and remove their links."

This was why FWN launched its "Shaping the Filipina Image" campaign, which, she says, is "another step in creating a positive image and opens up leadership opportunities for Filipinas in the US."

100 Most Influential Pinays

Shaking the bigas gathering, Mondejar says she will push FWN's "mentoring" and leadership programs, and the selection of the "100 Most Influential Filipinas in the US."

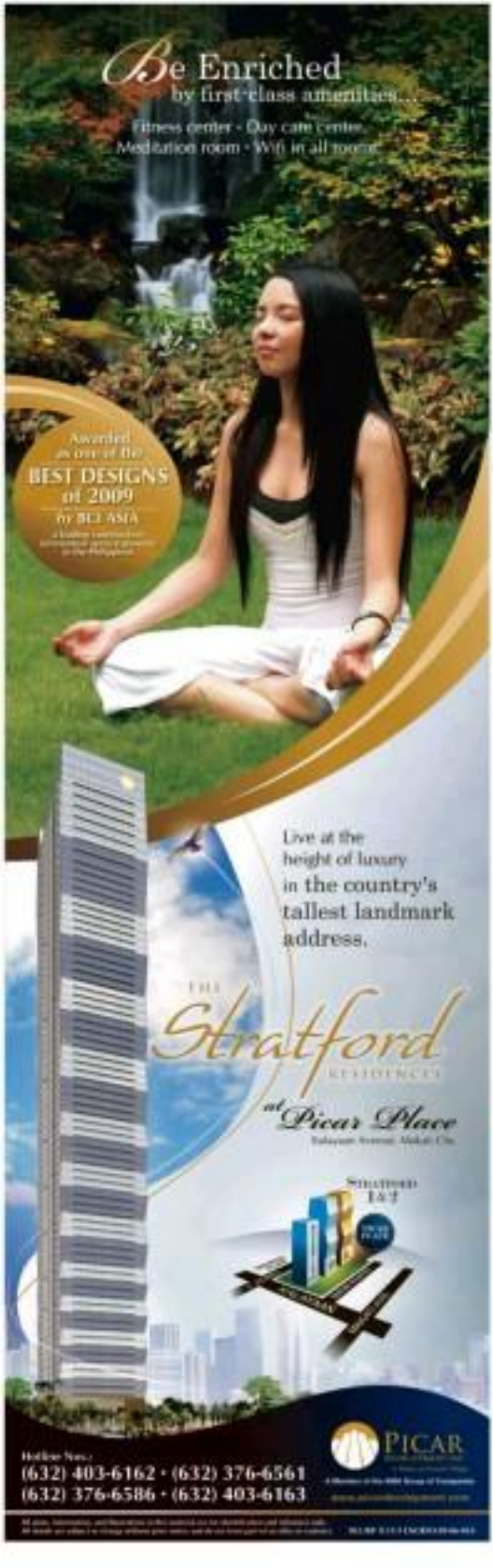
She hopes each of the 200 "most influential" Filipina women selected in 2007 and 2008 would take at least one Filipina under her wing and teach her what it takes to make it in the American workplace.

"Can you imagine?" she says rhetorically. "By 2020 (a time for a planned Pinay Power reunion) we'd have 400 more successful Filipinas other than Bad FWN 200 are selected next year."

To be sure, FWN faces many challenges. For one, "finding and keeping the FWN mission alive," she says.

But she draws her energy from FWN's members and from those who have come up, achieved. She still remembers the first summit in 2011 when she was selling the idea to a group of women in San Francisco. After her spiel, one of them stood up, saying: "I'm in. I want to be part of this group. I have never been in the same room with so many accomplished women. Here's my check!" Then just about everybody else took out their checkbooks and signed up.

PROUD TO BE PINAY Filipina Women's Network campaign logo



NEWS

MELODY Gershuch (second from left) on the night in 2009 she won a Bb. Pilipinas crown along with (from left) Regina Halos, Pamela Bianca Manalo, Marie-Ann Umali and Richell Angeles.

Bb. Pilipinas Int'l dies in car-bus collision

By Ray M. Nassif and Ephraim Aguilar
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LEGAZPI CITY—Reigning Pilipinas International 2009 Melody Gershuch was dead on the spot Saturday morning after the van she was riding in figured in a head-on collision with a public bus, an Army officer here said.

Two other persons, the driver and conductor of the beauty titlist, also died in the accident, which occurred at 11:45 a.m., according to Maj. Harold Cabunoc, public information officer of the 901st Infantry Division based in Pili, Camarines Sur, quoting an initial police report.

"The accident occurred in Barangay Peñafil in Polo," said Cabunoc in a text message.

Gershuch and her companions were in a Toyota Hiace van on their way to Naga City when their vehicle collided with a Goyuron Bus Line driven by Wilson Pontillas.

The bus driver surrendered to police, said Cabunoc.

The two others confirmed dead were Dodong Ramos, the driver, and Aldea Dawan, contestant of the beauty titlist.

A fourth victim, identified as Ronald Lita, survived and was rushed to the Bicol Medical Center.

Police said the bus was trying to avoid a tricycle when it hit the minivan.

A resident of Barangay Cullat in Daraga, Albay, Gershuch, 24, who was also Ms Bicolandia 2009, left her house at 9 a.m. to attend a pre-pageant event in connection with the coming celebration of the Peñafrancia Festival in Naga City next month.

Ricky Gonzales, brother of the owner of the minivan, said the van was a total wreck.

"The seats were totally mashed. The top [where Melody was aboard was totally wrecked that almost only the wheels were left," added Ariel Cobos, president of the Rotaract Club of Legazpi District.

Gershuch was a member of Rotaract, a Rotary-sponsored service club for young men and women aged 18 to 30.

On Nov. 28 last year, Gershuch competed against more than 60 other contestants in the Miss International contest held in Beijing, China.

Gershuch had said then that "her bubbly character, positive attitude and passion for helping others" would help her clinch the title.

Gershuch placed in the top 15 but lost out to Miss Mexico Jimena Estrada Espinosa.

Beauty queen blogger Joyce Ibrahim Bautista, in an online interview, had listed numerous of Gershuch, who was born of a German father and Filipina mother:

"I remember last Christmas when Melody texted me that she had some special German Christmas cakes for sale at Rustic Oven (an eatery/cafe on Makati Avenue). I bought a few for my Christmas dinner and loved them they tasted. I even blogged about it," said Ibrahim Bautista, author of the "Adventures of a Beauty Queen" blog.

"Now, German Christmas cakes will be a bittersweet reminder to me of how we lost Melody. Let this be a call to our President Aquino to really START clean up our terrible roads and highways. Do not have to lose another beautiful person because of greedy companies and wayward bus drivers!"

Drug test for bus drivers pushed

AFTER the bus accident that killed 42 passengers in Sorsogon on Wednesday, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) said it would push for drug testing for bus drivers.

In a statement, PDEA Director General Dionisio Santiago said the agency is coordinating with leaders of the transport sector "to help police their ranks" and voluntarily submit their drivers to drug testing.

Santiago said road accidents involving the public transport sector are doing.

"We have seen an alarming rise in these incidences where drivers are dangerous drugs to stay awake, especially if they are driving overnight or long distances," Santiago said.

On Aug. 18, an Iloilo bus fell into a 30-meter ravine in Barangay Buntagan, Sablan, Benguet, killing 12 passengers. Children were among the casualties.

Santiago confirmed that a dispatcher of Iloilo Bus Corp. identified as Alfredo Rivera III was arrested in a joint operation by the PDEA Region I Office and the La Union Police in San Fernando City, La Union. Rivera was in the PDEA's watch list of drug dealers and was a suspected source of illegal drugs, particularly shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride), to bus drivers and conductors. Rivera was caught after reportedly trying to sell a sachet of shabu to an undercover PDEA agent for P1,000.

Santiago added that the arrest of Rivera could indicate that some bus accidents might not have been due to mechanical trouble but because the driver was under the influence of drugs. Alcuin Papa

Aplus METRO
Editor Alexander S. Lilunday

Mural is the message: Save the dolphins

By Jeannette I. Andrade

WITH EACH brush stroke, 34-year-old painter AO Saito brings back to life images of bottlenose dolphins, thousands of which are slaughtered annually by fishermen in Taiji, Japan.

The dolphins in Saito's mural-sized pieces breathe through their blowholes, cast the playful aerobatics they are known for. With his murals, Saito hopes to jumpstart a national campaign as part of a growing worldwide crusade to seek an end to the annual senseless killings in Japan of one of the most lovable, good creatures on earth.

For 15 years, the artist had gone into a hiatus, focusing on his profession as an architect and his passion for photography. But viewing the 2009 Academy award-winning documentary feature, "The Cove," which exposed the annual herding,

FULL STORY A-5

Audi stars in SM City North EDSA's silver celebration

The Philippines' largest Supermall has just turned 25, and everyone's invited to the festivities! Audi and SM City North EDSA unite to the delight of car enthusiasts in the metro. PGA Cars, Inc., as the sole importer and distributor of the German brand, is pleased to celebrate SM City North EDSA's spectacular silver-year anniversary with an equally luxurious raffle – they're putting up the impressive Audi A3 1.8 TFSI Sportback as the ultimate prize.

SM City North EDSA has consistently been upholding high standards when it comes to offering every Filipino the total mall experience, and the same holds true for its weekend partner, Audi. "Vorsprung durch Technik" is the mantra that acts as the driving force behind the car brand's success, and progress through technology is their basic philosophy.

It's been a quarter of a century for SM City North EDSA fueled by innovation and leaps forward. It's been over two decades of filling people with smiles and purposes, pleasure and memories. It's been twenty-five glorious years of offering more than a thousand ways to fully enjoy life. Join the celebration – head on to the City today and you just might drive your way back home in your very own Audi!

SM City North EDSA and PGA Cars pair up for an Audi A3 raffle promotion

In celebration of SM City North EDSA's 25th Anniversary, SM in partnership with PGA Cars, Inc. will be giving its customers a chance to win a brand new silver Audi A3 1.8 TFSI Sportback during its Grand Anniversary Raffle Promotion.

SM Prime Holdings President Hans T. Sy and PGA Cars, Inc. Chairman Robert Coyiuto, Jr. recently signed a memorandum of agreement formalizing the partnership at the SM Corporate Office. Porsche Phils. Head Roberto Coyiuto III, Audi Phils. Head Benedicto Coyiuto, PGM Director Prudencio Coyiuto, and Porsche Executive Director Anthony Lagmay were present as were SM Supermalls SVP for Marketing Joaquin Ilon Agustin and AVP for Operations Ilen Mateo.

PGA Cars, Inc. is the sole importer and distributor of Porsche and Audi automobiles in the Philippines. It is part of the Coyiuto Group of Companies, which is renowned for its insurance, real estate, securities, air transport, and oil exploration businesses.

The Audi A3 1.8 TFSI Sportback, worth P2.3M, is a car that uniquely blends sportiness, dynamism, and premium quality. Its design is solid and full of character, emphasized further by the front sport seats and the 3-spoke steering wheel. Infused with the latest technology and performance features, the fuel efficient and powerful Audi A3 is a driver's car – pure and simple. The 7 speed S tronic transmission is fitted with gear shift paddles which fully utilize the 1.8 liter turbo. Fuel Stratified Injection petrol engine which in turn produces 160 horsepower.

Every P1,000 single receipt purchase (cash or charge) by SM Advantage Cardholders from the SM Department Store, SM Hypermarket, Savemore, or from any participating mall establishment entitles one to a raffle coupon and a chance to take home this Audi A3 luxury car. The Grand Anniversary Raffle promotion is ongoing until October 31, 2010, and the draw will take place on November 8, 2010 at 7PM in the SMX Convention Center at the SM Mall of Asia complex. See posters and print ads for more details. Also, check out the Audi A4 and Q5 displays at The Block at SM City North EDSA.

PGA Cars, Inc. Chairman Robert Coyiuto, Jr. and SM Prime Holdings President Hans T. Sy signed a memorandum of agreement formalizing the partnership between SM and PGA Cars Inc. in giving customers a chance to win a brand new silver Audi A3 1.8 TFSI Sportback during the Grand Anniversary Raffle Promotion in celebration of SM City North EDSA's 25th Anniversary.

ING, Ayala Corporate

Mural is the message: Save the dolphins

From page A11

and biracial daughter of some 23,000 dolphins in a habitat they say is marinated in Taiji's toxic baths to convince his brother and sister for a swim.

The butchered dolphins, according to the documentary, were "injected" by a relentless processor underwater by marine park technicians for performances in their aquatic shows. The meat, reportedly high in mercury content, are sold by Taiji fishermen to the Japanese market and is sometimes passed off as whale meat. Hal became of its toxic contents, it was taken off the list of food items in Japan's school feeding program.

The mass slaughter of dolphins was Taiji's eighth-grandest secret until former "Flipper" trainer and marine life activist Ric O'Barry and Louie Psihoyos of the Oceanic Preservation Society unveiled the carnage that has for years stunned an international audience without making.

"I thought that if I staged a protest at the Japanese Embassy or at the marine parks, my cause would easily be forgotten after 1 hours, so what can would that be? But recently a way until they finds I could probably get my message across more easily," Sallo said.

Early start

Sallo started painting at the age of 10 under the tutelage of fantastic lions, an artist who taught art lessons at the University of the Philippines' Vargas Museum. Dropping out of art classes at 17, he concentrated on a career in architecture and photography.

When he decided to pick up his brushes again at 39, he thought of using as subject the preservation of whales. That was until he saw "The Cove."

In fact, he has painted 12,000 dolphins in his murals around Metro Manila and Subic. His message: Respect the ocean and keep wild animals in the wild.

Sallo is currently trying to complete his goal of drawing 23,000 dolphins for the schools of Metro Manila, encouraging children to paint with him to make them understand the value of life and the preservation of the marine ecosystem.

He showed location several small dolphin silhouette cutouts made from rubberized mats, which he gives to children as a small reward for participating in the activity.

Recently, he landed off the Metro Manila leg of his campaign at the Quirino and at the Quezon Parades Elementary Schools in Project 2, Quezon City, and Miriam College in Quezon City, before proceeding to paint the biggest mural in the Universities of the Philippines in San Juan. He next stop: Bulacan, Batanes, on Aug. 26.

"What we should be concerned with in the ethical issue of using animals in business for laughter, riddle or fun. Some marine parks, we teach kids to love the ocean, to love dolphins instead of killing them," Sallo stressed.

He cited O'Barry, who noted in thought in the early 1960s that training dolphins for taking them away from their natural habitat was a method of encouraging respect for nature.

The former dolphin trainer admitted that he derailed to use, do an industry he helped create after Corky, one of the five Flipper pets, committed suicide in his arms by refusing to breathe through her blowhole, a conscious effort for swimmers in the cetacean family that includes whales and porpoises.

O'Barry said dolphins appear to suicide "but this does not mean they are happy.

"When we are dolphins in chains, we are stressed, but we

MURO (left) with television personality Marc Nelson who joined the artist in painting a dolphin mural in Pasig City.

THE ARTIST at Quirino Elementary School in Quezon City. "This is not only about animals. This is about us."

5 suspects in Makati hazing case face charges

By Tina G. Santos

CLARENCE have been filed in the Makati City Prosecutor's Office against five members of the Alpha Phi Omega (APO) fraternity allegedly involved in the death of a University of Makati (UMak) student during initiation rites last week.

Supt. Froilan Bonifacio, Makati chief of police, said the five face charges of illegal initiation and violation of the Anti-Hazing Law.

The suspects, who were denied voluntarily, were identified as John Marin and Michael Pagaduan, both 19 years old; Reed Pelenidas, 18, all students of UMak; and Piero Manzalapas, 21, an alumnus of the school.

Bonifacio said the fifth suspect was still-still because he is a minor. But Bonifacio said he faces the same charges and will be turned over to the city social welfare office.

The police official added that the suspects admitted they were present when Ed Karl Icela, 19, was allegedly subjected to hazing. Three were taken names in the charge sheet, but Bonifacio refused to divulge their identities pending their arrest.

"We have been securing statements broken from the alleged suspects. But as of now, for the court to issue warrants for their arrest since we already filed charges against them," he told reporters.

Icela's body was retrieved from a nearby creek earlier in Binangay Laurel, Sta. Maria, Laguna province on the afternoon of Aug. 15.

Senior Supt. Gilbert Cruz, Laguna provincial police director, said Icela bore bruises in both legs. There were also wounds and scratches on his face, which he probably sustained when he was thrown into the ravine.

An initial investigation showed that around 35 people were present during the hazing rites that allegedly happened in Binangay Sta. Antonio, Makati City last Saturday.

Laguna police said Icela was probably already dead before he was brought to Sta. Maria.

Meanwhile, UMak president Tomas Lopez said fraternities are banned in the university.

"All freshmen students, in fact, are made to sign contracts stating that they are not affiliated to any fraternities or organizations not authorized by the school," he told reporters.

"But of course, we cannot control their activities outside the campus. Nevertheless, we are vigilant in cracking down on members of such organizations," he added.

Lopez added that the university's student affairs office has started organizing seminars to warn the student body about the hazards of joining fraternities.

Icela's relatives claimed his body bore suffering injuries and would be expelled. The school official said the UMak's disciplinary board would have to assess their involvement in such incidents before handing the cases.

"We do not intervene with the affair pleaded here. But we assure everyone there will be due process before we institute expulsion proceedings," he said.

MetroBriefs

2 suspects nabbed for passing fake peso bills

MANILA Police District (MPD) operatives arrested two suspects on Thursday evening and Friday night for passing on and making counterfeit peso bills. Members of the MPD Sta. Cruz station 5 arrested Phillip Ian Rosario, 30, of Valenzuela City, and his accomplice and suspected fake bill manufacturer Ministra Joseph, 30, a milk soybean processor, at around 8:20 p.m. of Aug. 19 when he tried to buy groceries with a fake P1,000 bill. Del Rosario tipped off the policemen about Joseph, whom he claimed was also responsible for distributing the fake money in the Sta. Cruz and Quiapo areas. Members of MPD Station 3 caught Joseph in his home on Friday night and seized the pieces of silk screen, bearing P1,000 billings. The suspects remain detained at the Sta. Cruz police station pending the filing of a charges of illegal possession and use of false treasury or bank notes and other instruments of credit and the manufacture and possession of instrument or implements for falsification the City Prosecutor's Office. —Jeannette I. Andrade

Worker found dead in creek

A 27-YEAR-OLD construction worker was found floating in a creek near Manalac Avenue in Cotogan Center, Pasig City yesterday morning. Ed-ward Acosta Pagadian, 5'3"-year-old native of Mindoro Occidental, was found out of the creek around 10 a.m. A passerby spotted the dead body and immediately alerted a nearby police station, based on IDs and documents the victim had with him. Initial investigation revealed that Jose Masonry, a subcontractor in a building under construction in Ortigas Center, former boy. Roderick Tonga, precinct commander in Pasig City, said Acosta died after he fell 40 feet to a creek below Manalac Avenue. According to an initial investigation, the victim sustained head injuries, suggesting that he had bumped his head against a gutter near the creek. The victim was last seen having drinks with fellow workers in a bar in Pasig City late Friday night, police said. Police immediately ruled out foul play and declared the death an accident. —Nina Calleja

Mind Museum launched in Taguig

MANILA City officials, led by Mayor Lani Cayetano, and the Bonifacio Art Foundation Inc. (BAFI) recently got together for the city's official launching of The Mind Museum or Taguig (TMM)—the country's first interactive science museum. Mayor Cayetano and BAFI trustees Aurelio Bonifacio, Estela Gangoso, Michelle Gonzales, Rodi Mercedes, Jeffrey Morales, and Milagros Villanueva, and City Assessor Frankie Rodriguez were altogether an update on the progress of TMM—from the funds raised, number of participating experts to the museum's features. Bonifacio Jose V. Campos described to the city officials the dedication and hard work invested in TMM and to make the P1 billion project a reality. In the last three years, 150 people have been working on the project—58 designers, four architects, 24 scientists, 12 engineers, 16 exhibit administrators, 12 student interns, 28 building consultants, and the Gail employees. TMM is a nonprofit, world-class science museum set to open in 2011. It will rise on a 12,000 square meter premise lot in Bonifacio Global City. Over 200 interactive exhibits of the museum will feature various facts, the process of discovery and their applications.

Slander suit to be filed vs TV exec

By Julie Pl.-Aurelio

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice has directed the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office to file a slander case against GMA 7 network executive Wilma Galvante in the Quezon City Metropolitan Trial Court.

The DOJ issued the order after granting the petition for review of talent manager Annabelle Rama-Gutierrez who sought a reversal of a July 16, 2009 resolution by Assistant City Prosecutor Ronald Torralba.

Torralba had thrown out a slander complaint against Galvante, vice president of the entertainment division, because of lack of probable cause.

The case against Galvante is set to be filed in the Quezon City MTC.

Gutierrez claimed Galvante had badgered her in front of her ward, actor JC de Vera, in February 2009, saying that Gutierrez was not fit to perform her duties and obligations as a talent manager.

In a resolution signed by then DOJ secretary Alberto Agra, the DOJ gave weight to De Vera's affidavit in which he detailed his conversation with Galvante at her GMA Network office in Quezon City.

The actor claimed Galvante told him that once the story they were just relocating Gutierrez to a project, she would pull out her talents.

In granting the petition, the DOJ said the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office did not faithfully appreciate the pertinent portions of De Vera's affidavit.

"We find this lapse necessary because it totally changed the import of De Vera's statements," the resolution read.

The DOJ added that the motion should be both compulsory and responsible pleadings were evidentiary in nature and could be properly asserted not in a full blown trial.

Doing biz in a jiffy in Mandaluyong

By Nina Calleja

IN 30 MINUTES, those hoping to do business in Mandaluyong City can kissed permits after filing out their applications, simply by following a newly prepared flowchart to project efficiency.

Mayor Benhur Abalos, former president of the League of Cities of the Philippines, is urging other cities and towns in the country to follow their lead and adopt the simplified business registration and permit processing, a procedure that was first used in Mandaluyong.

Using his city as example, the mayor said simplifying the processing of business papers all over the country will translate to added investments and increased revenues.

Last year, Metro Manila mayors came out with a consensus that would revise their transaction systems and procedures.

It included a unified procedure for business in Metro Manila and limiting over the simple transactions are completed within five days, and 10 days for complex transactions.

Catherine de Leon-Ibay, head of the Mandaluyong's business permits and licensing department, said a customer service officer would do the routing of the paper work.

She added that steps for persons on applications for business permit have been reduced from 27 to just four.

The World Bank Group has rated Mandaluyong as the most business-friendly city in the country and rated it as 30th among 178 global economies.

SERVICE-ORIENTED WORKFORCE
To further enhance its service in Skyway maintain by strengthening its manpower pool, Skyway O&M Corp. welcomed 314 applicants for the positions of accountant, toll clerks, secretaries and executive assistants during the Mega Join Fair held recently at SM City Sucat. The event was organized by the Public Employment Office of Parañaque City Mayor Florencio Bernabe Jr.

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Chanco

Israel, Palestinians to talk peace anew

WASHINGTON—The Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, agreed to resume direct negotiations with Israel only after intense pressure from the United States and Europe, diplomats said on Friday, as the Obama administration sought to restart the Middle East peace process but left many key questions unanswered.

In formally announcing the new talks on Friday, Secretary of State Hillary Stellaris Clinton said that the negotiations would cover all the issues that had befuddled peace negotiators since 1979—the status of Jerusalem, the borders of a Palestinian state, the right of return for Palestinian refugees who were forced to leave their homes and security provisions for Israel. But she pointedly did not mention a basic plank of previous talks—using Israel's pre-1967 borders as a basis for territorial negotiations.

Nor did the Obama administration announcement make any mention of a set agenda, a plan by which issues would be tackled first, or any basic terms of negotiations. And neither Clinton nor the administration's Middle East envoy George J. Mitchell, made any mention of whether Israel would agree to extend a moratorium on the construction of Jewish settlements, which Palestinian negotiators had previously indicated was a crucial requirement to the success of any peace deal, and which Abbas himself had previously demanded as a condition to talks.

Middle East experts said that the lack of specificity in Friday's announcement, and the lack of any public signal by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel that he would make any concessions, could prove perilous domestically for Abbas, who is already the politically weak leader of a divided people. As a result, analysts said, Abbas is coming to the table reluctantly. Abbas made no public statement on Friday.

Daniel Levy, a former Israeli peace negotiator, said "Abbas wanted a clear reference to the 1967 lines; instead he was given 12 months to continue making his case to the hope that the Americans will intervene don't slowly." Arab diplomats offered a similar analysis.

But American diplomats, then European counterparts and President Barack Obama made the case to Abbas to return to the negotiating table without conditions, administration officials and Arab diplomats said. American officials argued that they could do more to help the Palestinian cause through direct negotiations. By setting a one-year deadline for the negotiations, Obama, who met with Abbas at the White House in June, is implicitly giving the Palestinian leader the assurance that if the two sides cannot make progress soon, the United States will step in with its own proposal outlining what a peace deal should look like.

"We will be active and sustained partners, although we recognize that this is a bilateral negotiation," Mitchell told reporters at a state department news conference. "And we have indicated to both parties that, as necessary and appropriate, we will offer bridging proposals."

For Obama, "the challenge is straightforward—difficult, but straightforward," said Martin S. Indyk, a former American ambassador to Israel and Middle East peace negotiator. "The US jobs is to determine the minimum requirements of the two sides through the process, and then to offer bridging proposals." NYT

Australia polls too close to call

SYDNEY—Polls closed on Saturday in Australia's most populous states where the country's closest general election in decades is expected to be narrow last.

Voting stations in the crucial states of Queensland and New South Wales shut at 6 p.m. after a frantic campaign that could see Prime Minister Julia Gillard ousted by conservative leader Tony Abbott.

Early exit polls taken before voting ended pointed to Gillard's government retaining power with a slim majority if the vote count proves southern across the country.

But even senior ruling party figures conceded it would be tough for the Labor Party to win some of the crucial marginal seats it needs to retain power against Abbott's conservative Liberal-National coalition.

"We will get down to 80 or more marginal seats throughout the country... that is where the election will be decided," Foreign Minister Stephen Smith told state broadcaster ABC TV.

"I can find 80 seats where I think Labor will win. It's very difficult to find the next 16 that we need for the (parliamentary) majority and a lot will depend on how the battle has gone on the ground."

The coalition needs a uniform 2.3 percent swing against Labor to win power, and the government must win 76 of the lower house's 150 seats (51.3 to avoid a humiliating ouster after less than three years in power.

A Channel Nine exit poll predicted the ruling Labor Party would win the election with 52 percent of the overall vote to 48 for the opposition Liberal/National coalition, with a small swing to the government.

But the poll also reported an average 5.1-percent swing against Labor in crucial marginal seats in Queensland and New South Wales, where the election will be won or lost.

A separate Sky News exit poll showed Labor ahead of opposition leader Tony Abbott's party by 51 percent to 49, but former Labor Prime Minister Bob Hawke conceded that the exit polls may not translate in a parliamentary victory.

"It would rather take the exit polls (in a positive) way but it is a fact that we could have a narrow Labor victory a narrow coalition victory or a hung parliament," he told Sky News. AFP

GILLARD

Blackwater settles with US for $42M

WASHINGTON—The private security company formerly called Blackwater Worldwide, long plagued by accusations of impropriety, has reached an agreement with the State Department for the company to pay $42 million in fines for hundreds of violations of US export control regulations.

The violations included illegal weapons exports to Afghanistan, making unauthorized payments to Iraqi troops and failing to maintain adequate records, according to company and government officials familiar with the deal.

The settlement, which has not yet been publicly announced, follows lengthy talks between Blackwater, now called Xe Services, and the State Department that dealt with the violations as an administrative matter, allowing the firm to avoid criminal charges. A company spokesperson confirmed on Friday that a settlement had been reached. The state department spokesperson, Philip J. Crowley, said he could not immediately comment.

The settlement with the state department does not resolve other legal troubles still facing Blackwater and its former executives and other personnel. Those include the indictments of five former executives, including Blackwater's former president, on weapons and obstruction charges, as federal investigators into evidence that Blackwater officials sought to bribe Iraqi government officials, and the arrest of one former Blackwater guards on federal murder charges stemming from the killing of two Afghan civilians last year.

But by paying fines rather than facing criminal charges xo the corporate violations, Blackwater will be able to continue to obtain government contracts. While the company has its largest federal contract last year to provide diplomatic security for US embassy personnel in Baghdad, where the Iraqi government was licensed by killings of Iraqis in one highly publicized case, it still has contracts to provide security for both the state department and the CIA in Afghanistan.

Blackwater, its reputation tainted in part because of the excessive use of force by some of its personnel in Baghdad, sought for years to extend its reach far beyond the war scenes of Iraq and Afghanistan. NYT

Millions of eggs recalled in US scare

A NATIONAL outbreak of salmonella was linked on Friday to another major egg producer, Hillandale Farms, prompting the recall of an additional 230 million eggs in 14 states.

The latest action—the third recall announcement in two weeks for eggs—is bound to shake the confidence of consumers rushed by a succession of food safety scares in recent years, most prominently for foods like beef and lettuce.

The latest recall has half a billion rotten eggs have been circulating in the food supply cannot as an embarrassment for the egg industry and federal regulators, how egg safety rules were toughened after the Food and Drug Administration had said would prevent tens of thousands of salmonella illnesses a year.

"You have to treat eggs with the assumption that they're contaminated with salmonella," said Carol Tucker Foreman, a food safety expert of the Consumer Federation of America. "We may all object to the fact that we have to treat food like nuts eaten, but if we don't want to get sick, and especially if you have someone in your house that's immune-suppressed, you have to handle things carefully and demand that the standards be set higher."

Hillandale Farms, one of the nation's largest egg companies, said it was recalling eggs produced at two Iowa sites, in some cases as far back as April.

It follows an even larger recall by Wright County Eggs, also of Iowa, which involved 380 million eggs on Aug. 13, and Dan expanded its recall by an additional 150 million eggs on Wednesday. NYT

WORLD BRIEFS

Iran to fire up first nuclear plant after decades of delay

BUSHEHR—Iran on Saturday began transferring barrels to Russian-built first nuclear plant, as it remains defiant about sanctions imposed by world powers over its controversial atomic program. After decades of delay, engineers will finally transfer the Russia-supplied fuel into the plant in the southern port city of Bushehr, in the presence of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors. The event "will be a threat to the rest of the world," the Islamic republic's nuclear chief Ali Akbar Salehi told reporters last week, adding that the transfer would be completed by Sept. 5. On Friday, Iranian Atomic Energy Organization spokesperson Ali Shirzadian said the $1-billion plant's actual commissioning would come in October or November when it connects to the national grid. The much-anticipated launch comes despite Moscow—along three nuclear ally—hardening its position on Tehran's nuclear program. AFP

Aid pours into Pakistan but UN warns of long road ahead

ISLAMABAD—UN chief Ban Ki-moon praised the global community as emergency donations for Pakistan neared $500 million but warned the flood-ravaged country faces "years of work." Donations have outstripped the $460 million sought by the UN emergency appeal as the global relief effort kicked into gear amid unprecedented calls for help by Pakistan. The Financial Tracking Service, a UN database that aims to track all donations, showed late Friday that $406.7 million in funding has been collected, with another $225 million pledged. The United States leads the way followed by Saudi Arabia and Britain. The United Nations on Thursday had launched a humanitarian appeal for Pakistan—a disaster which the UN's Ban called a "slow-motion tsunami." AFP

Hip-hop star Wyclef Jean barred from Haitian election

HAITI's Electoral Council announced on Friday ruling that Wyclef Jean, the Haitian-American hip-hop star, had been disqualified as a candidate for president of his earthquake-stricken homeland. No explanation was given. A spokesperson for the council, Richardson Dorsinvil, facing reporters who had been standing vigil at the election bureau all day, read a list of 10 presidential aspirants deemed eligible and 15, including Jean, whose candidacy had been rejected. But Jean, who was born in Haiti, was rejected because he did not meet the requirement of having lived in Haiti for five consecutive years before the Nov. 28 elections. Born in Haiti, Jean left as a child for the United States and now, based in New Jersey, travels often to his homeland. NYT

Harvard finds scientist guilty of misconduct

HARVARD University said on Friday that it had found a prominent researcher, Dr. Marc Hauser, "culpably responsible" for eight instances of scientific misconduct. Hours later, Hauser, a biologist, announced that he was taking a leave of absence. In a statement, he said he was responsible for his actions, but he disputed the characterization of misconduct. Hauser, who is known for his work on animal cognition and morality, made his first public statement since news of the inquiry emerged last week, telling The New York Times, "I acknowledge that I made some significant mistakes" and saying he was "deeply sorry for the problems this case had caused to my students, my colleagues and my university." NYT

SLIMMERS WORLD

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Located at the heart of Parañaque City just 20 minutes away from the Makati Business District, Chateau Elysée boasts an enchanting architecture that sprawls on 4.7 hectares of prime land. It consists of six masterfully designed clusters; Concorde, Lafayette, Eiffel, Ritz, Vendome and Seine, with each cluster consisting of four low-rise buildings that can only be described as a work of art.

Chateau Elysée truly is a sanctuary of privacy and ease as it devotes more than half of the property to its valued amenities that include a clubhouse with complete recreational facilities, fitness gym, swimming pools and sports facilities for health buffs, just to name a few.

Those of you who are still on the fence about being a part of the tranquil environment one would experience at Chateau Elysée would be happy to know that they are offering one-bedroom, two-bedroom and three-bedroom units, all of which exude comfort and freedom of space.

Would-be residents are sure to benefit from the well-thought living space, exquisitely-designed from the living room to the kitchen. Its high ceilings create a sense of airy openness with wide windows that look out across the pleasant and vast expanses of gardens and courtyards.

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Archers, Eagles face off anew

FOURTH-SEEDED ARCHERS earn either twice-to-beat or twice-to-win incentives in their quarterfinal duel with fifth-seeded Letran in the NCAA men's basketball tournament at the Araneta Coliseum on Monday.

Archers coach Jeff Napa said the Knights' twice-to-beat edge is a big advantage, but his wards are ready to take on the challenge.

"Twice-to-beat is a big advantage, but we're ready to play," Napa said. "We're not afraid of anybody. We're ready to play anytime, anywhere."

Archers forward Jeff Viernes said the Knights' twice-to-beat edge is a big advantage, but his wards are ready to take on the challenge.

"Twice-to-beat is a big advantage, but we're ready to play," Viernes

CAMSUR EVENT

Cobra Ironman gets going

By Leira Cayco

PILI, CAMARINES SUR—With over 800 athletes from 34 different countries competing, the Cobra Ironman 70.3 Philippines kicks off today at the Caroline Watersports Complex here.

The race kicks off at 6 a.m., with defending champion Terenzo Bozzone booted in a field that will cover a 2-km swim, a 90-km bike, and a 21.1-km run route.

To ensure a smooth conduct of the event, the national road from Iyd Rosario, Naga City to Palestina in Pili will be closed from 6 a.m. to 11 a.m., according to an advisory from Richard Rivera, general manager of the CWC.

Bozzone, from New Zealand, won last year's race in 3 hours 34 minutes. Fellow Kiwi Cameron Brown, third last year, is also figured to finish strongly.

French Canadian Magali Tourrye, 28, is a hot favorite in the women's division, having won three 70.3 races in the past five weeks.

She also placed third in the world championship in Clearwater, Florida, with a cruising 2:32 run split (1:20:32).

Michelle Jones, a resident of California and former winners of the Iowa Ironman (2006), and 39-year-old Hilary Cooper are expected to put pressure on Tourrye.

Among the locals to watch out for are triathlon star Noy Aquino and Mona Torres.

Comeback queen Sandra Arnaiz is also expected to be a force to reckon with. JC Lengit, who is coming off a training stint in New Zealand and Estes Ironman qualifier Isi de Leon are among the big local names in the field.

Celebrities are also entered in today's event including actor Pido Pacual. Times has set aside a watch as a prize for anybody who can correctly predict the celebrity's time.

Bernard will do the one leg of the Times team that will participate in the triathlon relay. His teammates are Jess Asher (cycling) and Lauramea Medenilla (bike).

The course promises to be just as brutal as last year with the initial swim leg testing the participants immediately.

One of the participants in the relay crowned last year and drawn and illguards will be on standby for the swim leg the time.

The bike course will run through a deceptively flat course at the start, before the riders encounter strong head winds. Once the participants reach the run stage, they are expected to battle maddening temperatures expected to hit 40 degrees celsius.

Fred Ostrogan, Alaska CEO and Ironman franchise owner said "I'm hoping people surpass their own expectations."

MIAMI HEAT COACH HOLDS ONE-DAY TRAINING CAMP

Gatorade

As part of the 9-day NBA FIT Week in the Philippines, Filipino-American head coach of the Miami Heat Erik Spoelstra conducted a basketball training camp last August 11, 2010 at the Araneta Coliseum for college basketball players.

The event was also highlighted by the patented Gatorade Sweat Test that determines how much fluids basketball players secrete in the form of sweat. The players were given tips on how to hydrate themselves in preparation for competition.

"Coach Spo," as he likes to be called, stressed the need for proper hydration. "A player cannot think properly or focus on the game when he is tired and not getting the proper fluids. The message of our training camp has been one of health, wellness, and paying close attention to hydration and nutrition. With the quality of basketball improving here in the Philippines, if Filipinos play with a sense of urgency, then we might see a Filipino in the NBA soon."

With a degree in communications, Spoelstra, the first ever Filipino-American head coach in any of the major North American sport leagues, also encouraged constant communication in every team.

"It helps a lot to hydrate. It also helps us in our performance. I drink Gatorade during our practices and games," said Alaska swingman Kirk Long who was one of the UAAP and NCAA guest players present during the training camp along with Adamson University's Alex Nuyles and Miguel's Andrei Blevens.

"Ok naman yung training camp, more on communication talaga siya para mag-work yung players as a team. And you have to focus more," said Nuyles.

Coach Spo with the eight local basketball players.

Warming down up before the game.

Players undergoing with Gatorade after the Gatorade Sweat Test.

Gatorade, sports beverage helps athletes prepare hydration.

Drinking water is not enough to hydrate. With the help of Gatorade, the fluid loss of an athlete is replenished and can help them perform better.

For Spoelstra, it's impossible for a team to grow if there is no communication, that is why he encourages the players to talk, whether in practice or in a real game.

"Due to fluid loss, cramps can occur in every player that can affect performance. The focus of the players is somehow affected, causing them to lose their attention on what the coach instructs," said the sports scientist. "Drinking water is not enough to hydrate. Gatorade replenishes the fluid loss of an athlete and helps him perform better."

Every 2% fluid loss results in a 20% drop in performance. That's equivalent to 2/10 of a second drop in reaction," he summed up.

Every 2% fluid loss results in a 20% drop in performance. Gatorade restores the winning edge.

Yap wants posh condo for son

AFTER DOMAR "Mar" Yenco ascended defeat of his WBO minimumweight title against Mexican Mario Rodriguez, the next question is will he go the same route as fellow Pinoy champions Manny Pacquiao and Donito Donaire Jr.?

It's probably too early to tell, although all the reports I've talked upon that Nonoy is "a decent fighter," and that right now, he and Pacquiao are the only two boxers who will be going undefeated by the end.

Incredibly defending his title three in Manila, which he describes as "home bed," is in itself a big accomplishment. It may not be in his consciousness yet, but when will the public—such as a television exec—start naming Donaire's way?

One boxing analyst said Donaire needs to develop his own offensive appeal and charisma to enjoy the accoutrements of boxing success.

• • •

Jonny Yap is looking to buy a posh condominium unit in Makati so his son, presidential nephew Baby James, would have suitable accommodations when he comes to visit once a week.

Jonny's son was awarded by the court twice-a-week visitation rights, allowing Baby James to sleep with his father overnight at least once a week.

According to Jonny, he, his primary consideration in choosing a property is security. Second, the property must have a swimming pool.

"Baby James loves to swim," said his father. "The condo unit I'm looking at is beautiful and will suit the taste of Baby James."

Purchase of the multi-million property will be finalized as soon as James returns from his vacation in the United States.

James leaves this weekend with negotiations for the renewal of his expired contract with D-Meg Derby Ace still up in the air.

• • •

Did Kristy Kardic mean Jefferson "Mother" Lim on the telecast?

A veteran colleague is inclined to believe such is the case, after doing an intensive research on the background of the groom, whose family owns a chain of grocery stores in California.

His research yielded information that was far from impressive, some even downright negative, as he unearthed facts from long buried files.

"He may not be the big catch everyone thought he was. But that's not our problem. After all, he made no such claim," my colleague said.

When was once engaged to former PBA commish reporter Janelle So, now based in Los Angeles. He has three children from a previous marriage, according to the scribe, and he has a fourth on the way with Krista.

A third wedding for the Lim was on in Manila some years ago, same date slotted by Hunas and Ruelo for their church rites. Any. That will be on Nov. 11, 2011 or 11/11/11.

• • •

Through media, semi-retired PBA ranger Alex Crisano is making it known that he wants to make a comeback in the pro league.

Assuming Crisano walks Robert Jaworski, the 6-foot-7 ranger has his eyes set on the Rain or Shine team, which is in dire need of a big man.

Crisano believes he can help the Elasto Painters win its first-ever PBA championship.

"I believe I can bring Rain or Shine to the finals."

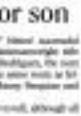
He said he has good chemistry with SB Ann Del Mercado and Gabe Norwood, both classmates he considers to form a "power-trio."

"It will be the local version of Manny Pacquiao's dream team of Lebron James, Dwayne Wade and Chris Bosh," Crisano said.

Yesterday morning, I asked Rain or Shine team owner Raymond Yu if he was considering the proposal.

His reply: "That's a difficult question to answer."

IN HUDDLE



Butch Cerila

BY TOP CHOICE

Ar Sanra Ana Pure

Our Lady of Fatima U clobbers UMak five

By Mark Anthony Rojas

OUR LADY of Fatima University grabbed the overall lead with an emphatic 88-48 victory over collar-dweller University of Makati yesterday in the Nationwide Athletic Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities at the SSMA Gym in Subic, Zambales.

Considered as league dark horse, the Phoenix handily broke a sweat in beating the feisty Hawks with four players teaming in double-digit performances to register their sixth triumph in seven matches. UMAK fell to 0-7.

Patrick Overbeek, five-time champion University of Manila (5-1) which is facing Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Pasay (5-1) on promotion.

Randy Suaco, a 6-foot-3 center-forward from Aurora Province, scored seven points in his weight around six more to 20 points.

He got ample support from 6-3 forward Carl Siddivella who chalked 15 points. The sophomore from Camiguin also contributed three rebounds and two steals.

Efficiently shuffled by former national players Benny Espiritu, the Phoenix displayed teamwork to the hilt with 6-foot playmaker Alfred Cadilla running the plays and making 11 points, four assists and four steals for the team.

No. 9 possible for RP 3-on-3 youth cagers

THE 3-ON-3 basketball team kept the Philippine campaign going in the 2010 Youth Olympic Games in Singapore, finishing the Central African Federation, 22-14, yesterday to remain in contention for a top 10 finish in the country's first-ever sport.

Aaron King scattered nine points and landed three rebounds while Cris Michael Yolonia contributed seven points and five rebounds for the Nationals, who scored their second win in the elimination round.

10-American Bobby Ray Parks Jr., son of many-time PBA first-leaper awardee Bobby Parks, and Michael Fitz added three points each as the Filipinos clinched at least 12th place.

The Filipinos, who lost the first three of their four elimination games to fall into the consolation bracket, will next battle Iran, a 20-17 winner over New Zealand.

The winner of the RP-Iran game today stays alive for a shot at ninth place tomorrow (today), we progress to another game Monday, which we need to win to order for us to finish 9th place."

The Nationals, who beat South Africa for their first win, overwhelmed a tall Cliff squad made up of four 6-foot-6 Americans, 6-3 Neil Lumbocan, 6-2 Rodrigo Rabelo-Bertoldo and 5-11 Anthony Gourley.

Meanwhile, RP delegation chief of mission Mark Joseph announced his election as secretary general of the Southeast Asian Swimming Federation, Named to different committees were former Asian Games champion Raj Bonoto (swimming), Lauro Margallo (water polo), Mario Limsaeche (diving) and Bebiu Suarez (synchronized swimming).

Marc Anthony Reyes

Cardona goes to Meralco

By Mycaeng R. Cardilla

MAC CARDONA, the unorthodox and immensely intense Talk 'N Text outspoken cast of De La Salle, will play for new team Meralco in the coming Philippine Basketball Association season.

Talk 'N Text is dropping Cardona to its main dish using his 6-3 as a conduit with the Express, in return, getting point guard Arah Ubaldo and the third choice of TNT in the rookie draft next week.

Cardona's transfer was confirmed by Meralco coach Ryan Gregorio in a text message to writers late Friday night.

Ubaldo made his undrafted rookie and year with Sta. Lucia but played beyond expectations and finished second to Sta. Rita Rhodes of Pamboada Derby Ace in the Rookie of the Year race.

Talk 'N Text has been left with the No. 4 choice in the Draft and without Cardona, its leading local scorer who, reports said, had feuded with head coach Chot Reyes all this time.

"Yes, he is," Gregorio said when asked if he got a franchise player in Cardona. "He's like Jimmy Alapag, his former superstar guard at Pamboada Derby Ace) because he is an explosive scorer. He has incredible scoring ways and is hard to stop like Jimmy."

On Friday Monday, which bought the free agent of Sta. Lucia, also signed up rookie Rene Seliga also in a three-team trade that brought Ali Peek back to Talk 'N Text with Ubaldo coming back to Quinahan.

Gregorio said that the wheeling and dealing does not stop with the Cardona acquisition.

"We want to be competitive right from day 1," Gregorio said the hopes to see the phone.

Cardona led Talk 'N Text locals in scoring in the Fiesta Conference with slightly over 13 points a contest.

Drawing the first three picks in the Aug. 29 draft, Meralco intends to use the first two to rank Fidelis Al Hamsira and Nonoy Baclao.

SSC, Adamson eye Final 4

ALTHOUGH TIMBRED as favorites, San Sebastian Darnbrief and Adamson remain wary of their separate opponents in the league-leaders aim for Final Four slots in the Shakey's V League Season 7 second conference today at the PhilSAA Flying V Arena in San Juan.

The Lady Stags clash with Far Eastern University at 4 p.m., before the Lady Falcons take the court at 6 p.m. against a Lyceum squad coming off a win-stay.

Women and National University clash at 2 p.m. to kick off the three-game bill.

The Lady Stags and the Lady Falcons continued to lord it over the field in nine games, winning seven each to share the top spot.

Victories by both teams will leave the four other quarterfinalists in a right race for the last two semifinal berths.

Lyceum, which stunned Arellano last Thursday, wound up tied with the Lady Eagles at third with similar 5-5 records.

Jeannine M. Pleyo

Juvic leads Order of Merit

KUALA LUMPUR—Juvic Pagunsan can't rest his steady play this season when he played Fourth yesterday in the $60,000 Mercedes-Benz Masters Malaysia won by Singaporean Marlon Bhattar via a sudden death playoff at Kota Permai Golf and Country Club in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The Filipino star shot a 1-under par 67 after earlier rounds of 72-70-69=278 with a 278 total like Malaysian Khor Hong Hwai, who carded a 68.

Pagunsan went on to grab the Mercedes-Benz Text Order of Merit lead with his earnings of $2,700 boosting his total take in six events to $22,458. He overtook the absent Chanvalit Plaphol of Thailand, who had $22,094. Antonio Lascuña (78-2011) tied for sixth place with Danny Chia of Malaysia while Gene Bondoc (71-2011) shared eighth spot with two others.

Asian Tour News

MEET THE INTERNATIONAL PROS AND FILIPINO ELITES OF THE COBRA IRONMAN 70.3 RACE

Cobra Energy Drink Ironman 70.3 Philippines CamSur is all geared up for an exciting race this year with the confirmed participation of some of the world's best professional triathletes and some of our very own top Filipino triathletes in what is undoubtedly the country's biggest triathlon event.

Several professional triathletes return this year including last year's winners from the Men's Division reigning Cobra Ironman 70.3 Philippines Champion **Terenzo Bozzone** and third placer **Cameron Brown**. Defending Filipino elites have also increased this year. Last year's Filipino Elite Champion, **Ney Jopson**, also returns this year to beat his own record.

Terenzo Bozzone already has dozens of first place wins highlighting his triathlon career. His Ironman wins include the 2010 Ironman New Zealand Taupo, where he finished second, last year's Cobra Ironman 70.3 Philippines where he finished first place clocking in at 03:51:23 hours, and the 2008 Ironman World Championship 70.3 in Clearwater, U.S.A., there setting a record at 3:40:48. for that year. Bozzone returns to defend his title at the Cobra Ironman.

Cameron Brown is a professional triathlete competing since 2000. He has won numerous Ironman triathlon including a nine-year winning streak in the New Zealand Ironman (2001-2005 and 2007-2010) and in the European Ironman Championships in Frankfurt, Germany - clocking in at 8:08 hours, his personal best to date. He has also competed in the prestigious Ironman World Championship in Kona, Hawaii, where he placed second in 2001 and 2006 at 8:46:18 and 8:19.56 hours respectively.

The women will not be outdone in this event, with new challenges for the 2010 title. Australian - born **Michelle Jones**, representing the United States, has been competing in triathlon since 1990. She is an accomplished Olympian, winning the Silver medal at the 2000 Summer Olympics triathlon. In 2005, Michelle moved to the Ironman race, winning several Ironman titles including the 2008 Ironman World Championship in Kona, Hawaii finishing at 09:10:11 hours. Her victory made her the first woman and only the second Australian in history to win the prestigious event.

Magali Tisseyre, also representing the U.S., has been named "2009 Ironman 70.3 Triathlete of the Year" by Triathlete Magazine for her outstanding accomplishments during her breakout year, including several wins in various Ironman 70.3 races and finishing third place in the Ironman 70.3 World Championship in Clearwater, Florida.

Other notable professional athletes in this year's line up are: **Courtney Ogden, Lesa Griffin** and **Justin Cole** of Australia; **Fredrik Cronsberg** of Sweden; **Erich Felkehel** of Hong Kong; and **Rinko Cooper** of the United States.

Among the Filipino contenders, **Ney Jopson** took the lead among the **Filipino Elites** in last year's Cobra Ironman 70.3 finishing at 04:30:32 hours. A multi-awarded triathlete, Ney has won three triathlon national titles, the Asian Cup Junior trophy in 1995, the silver medal at the 1994 Asian Championships and the Philippine Endurance title in 2003.

U.S. - born **Arland Macasick** is another storied favorite. He is a seasoned Tri-Am triathlete competing in numerous triathlons across the globe, including three Philippine National Triathlon championships and six finishes of Ironman. He is the first Filipino to qualify and finish in the Ironman World Championships in Kona, Hawaii in 1998 and the first Filipino to finish the full Ironman distance in less than 10 hours in the 2008 Ironman Western Australia.

Leo Ocasion gained popularity as the first Filipino to reach the highest peak in the world - Mt. Everest in Nepal in 2006. Prior to the climb, Leo has already been actively involved in triathlon, participating in Ironman Langkawi, Malaysia, placing in the top 40 and again competing in the 2009 Cobra Ironman 70.3 race.

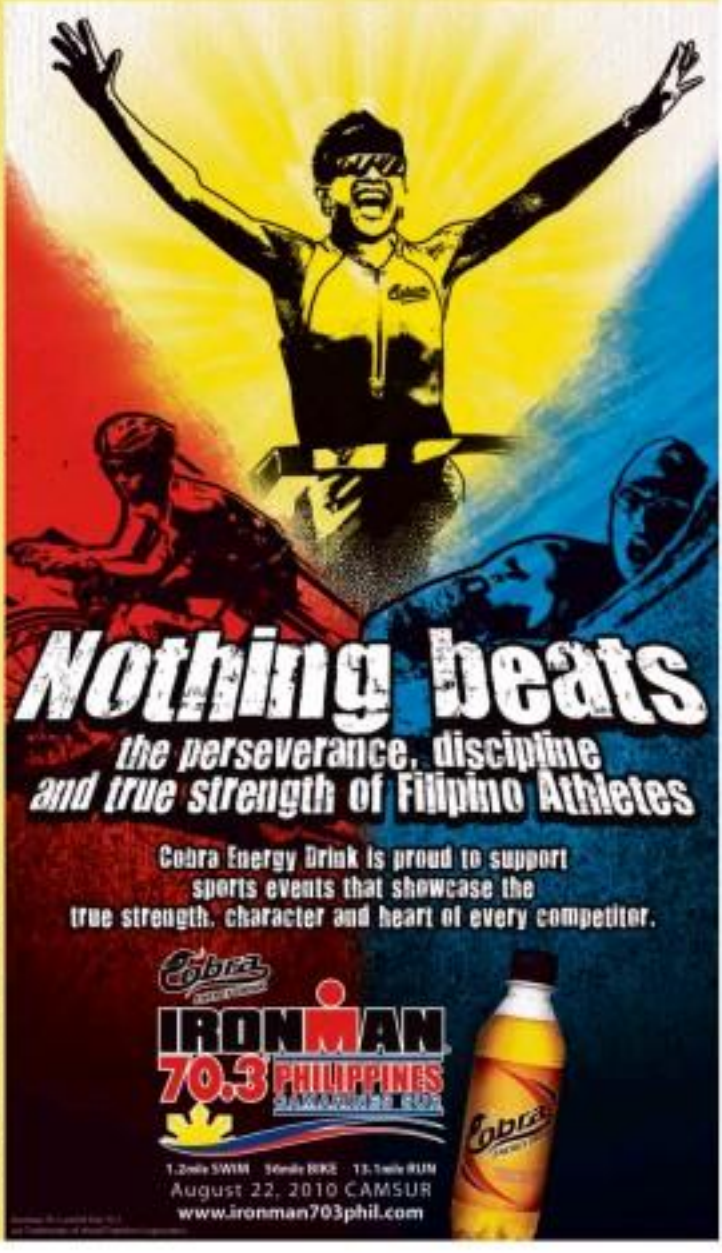
Aai Karina De Leon is probably one of the most decorated female triathletes in the country. A former member of the University of the Philippines (UP) swimming team, Aai shifted to triathlon after graduation, eventually competing in the 2008 Langkawi Ironman in Malaysia, clocking in at first place for her age group at 12:21:17 hours. This qualified her to race in the prestigious Ironman World Championship in Kona, Hawaii later that year, finishing at 11:07:00 hours, making her the first Filipina to ever compete in the said event.

Other Filipino Elites vying for a place in the 2010 Cobra Ironman 70.3 Philippines race are: **Alfino Aladagan, Gerrie Calderon, Mark Candelaria, Ferdinand Catubles, Ned Catil, Elmo Chrabol, John Gilbuena, Franklin Pelobino** and **Noel Salvador** for the men's category; and **Alexandra Gonzales, Lea Langit** and **Monina Torres** for the women's.

Watch these foreign professionals compete with the Filipino Elites at the toughest and most intense endurance race in the world. Catch the Cobra Energy Drink Ironman 70.3 Philippines CamSur leaks at the CamSur Watersports Complex, Pili, Camarines Sur. For more information on the event, visit www.ironman703phil.com.

Cobra Energy Drink is the official presenter of this year's Cobra Energy Drink Ironman 70.3 Philippines CamSur. Cobra strongly believes in what being an Ironman is about — its values of discipline, determination, endurance and perseverance to win despite difficult challenges and tough conditions.

TODAY'S THE DAY! BEST OF LUCK TO THE 841 PARTICIPANTS OF COBRA IRONMAN 70.3 PHILIPPINES!



Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

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'Sulit' cars on a roll, says CAMPI

By Kitz T. Ochonuba

ALICE, WHO now a first-time business, is one of many Filipinos who see their family vehicle for business errands, or vice-versa.

"When you buy a car, the cost doesn't end there," she says in Filipino. "It can needs maintenance and repairs. So it's better to buy a car for family and business use. That way it (car) pays for itself," she says.

Alice's strategy of buying a car as an investment is not much different from many car buyers, apparently.

"Filipinos value something 'sulit,' something that will serve more than one purpose," says Elizabeth H. Lee, president of the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines, Inc. (CAMPI).

"A lot of Filipinos buy cars for both personal and business use," she says in a roundtable discussion ahead of the third Philippine International Motor Show (PIMS).

Goals that for the 37.2 percent growth in retail industry sales year to date (January to July) against the same period last year, according to CAMPI.

Sales of commercial vehicles will surmount 65 percent share of total vehicle sales. Light commercial vehicles such as AUVs, pick-ups, vans and compact wagons are popular.

Passenger cars get the remaining 34.7 percent of the total car market.

The best part is, early-year growth until July signals sustained improvement in auto sales for the rest of the year, says Lee.

According to industry data, entrepreneurs and relatives of Filipinos working abroad are the main drivers of growth in motorists.

OFW remittances is the biggest known. About $18 billion in remittances could flow into the Philippines in 2018 and this would drive consumption in general, OFW remittances represent about 12 percent of gross domestic product.

Lee says that the performance of the auto industry reflected stronger consumer and business confidence, too.

Aggressive financing packages also make car buying easier and more affordable.

"Banks are awash with cash and car loans are a growth area for them, especially in the [small] and medium enterprise] segment," Lee says.

What's more, car manufacturers are now recovering from the global economic slump and are ramping up production. With this, hourly orders are being filled, contributing to higher car sales.

"New models are being launched, too, which customers can check out at the PIMS," Lee says.

CAMPI is getting ready for its 3rd Philippine International Motor Show, touted as the country's very own flagship motor show, on August 29 at the World Trade Center.

According to CAMPI, PIMS is put together by 20 global brand manufacturers and assemblers as well as brand distributors.

Getting the most out of the car show experience

- Read up on pre-show trends.
- Wear comfortable shoes for a whole day of strolling.
- Check out brochures, not just traditional models. There are "green" and hybrid cars at the last PIMS.
- Take a car for a spin.
- Set the best deals from financing packages on offer right at the car show.
- Read and grasp what car buyers.
- Get the Green Motoring Guide to be given away in the first 5,000 guests at PIMS.
- Become all ears through the "Mere Smiles, Love Pilot" share-a-ride car program.
- Buy PIMS t-shirts, tattoo IDs, mugs, bags and other merchandise from Gaumeni Shop.

Asians more attuned to fuel saving than Europeans

By Amy R. Borro

AS PRICES of petroleum products continue to soar, motorists worldwide have started to look for ways to save on the fuel they consume.

In the Philippines, much attention is given to any gasoline fuel-saving measures, as the country imports over 99 percent of its crude and petroleum requirements and is thus, highly vulnerable to any price movements in the international market.

"Sure enough, Filipino drivers, compared to its neighboring and European counterparts, have been found to be "increasingly interested in ad-ition on how to save fuel," posting a 87 percent interest according to a survey conducted by Royal Dutch Shell Plc.

Nearly one percent of the Filipino respondents also say they were totally willing to change their behaviors to save fuel.

These are among the findings of Shell's third global market research into drivers' fuel saving habits and attitudes.

Before you turn on your car, read this first

This year's Shell FuelSave Report surveys 5,000 drivers across Europe and Asia, revealing what they are currently thinking and doing to save fuel.

"We have been working to find out more about drivers' attitudes to fuel efficiency and to help drivers to get the most out of every drop," Shell says.

"We launched the Shell FuelSave Challenge in 2007 to help drivers save fuel. By using Shell fuels with Fuel Economy formula combined with fuel saving techniques, the best drivers saved 24 percent on fuel. Three years later, we have trained over 160,000 drivers across 11 countries," Shell adds.

Shell conducted online interviews beginning March 2018 in the Philippines, UK, Denmark, Norway, Netherlands, Germany, Turkey, Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Thailand.

Based on the interviews, Asian drivers are found to be way ahead of their European counterparts in fuel saving. Motivated by the prospect of saving money and being environmentally responsible, motorists in the Asian region were also found to have become more conscious of fuel efficiency and are taking action to save fuel.

Asian drivers, results show, are more conscious of fuel efficiency and are more likely to take steps to save fuel than their European counterparts.

Lacking knowledge

A standout 95 percent of Asian drivers are actually eager for more information on how to save fuel while 89 percent are willing to actually change their driving behaviors to do so. Among Asian drivers, Thais are the most willing, followed by Filipinos while the Singaporeans are the least willing.

However, although majority of Asian drivers are in the right mindset to save fuel, many of

ASIANS/B2

Acting against discouragement

IT'S HARD to imagine a time when Samuel L. Jackson wasn't an A-List celebrity, but twenty years ago he was a frustrated, little-known actor who couldn't seem to breakthrough. Despite his prodigious talents, as of his 41st birthday Jackson could claim nothing more notable than a few minor cameos. Intensely discouraged, he turned to cocaine and quickly developed a dependency on the drug. Within a year, he hit rock bottom. When his wife and eight-year-old daughter discovered him passed out on the kitchen floor, there was no denying that he had lost control.

After finding Jackson unconscious, his wife LaTanya immediately decided to take a rehabilitation drink. For the first time, Samuel L. Jackson was forced to face up to his anger and discouragement, and he began to make life changes. To his credit, Jackson submitted himself to the recovery process, and with the encouragement of his family, he was able to break his addiction. Less than twelve months later, he finally achieved stardom for his supporting role in Jungle Fever. From then on, his reputation grew steadily, and he earned four-time Oscar nominations.

A LEADER'S WAY

Jobre C. Maxwell

Today, he is regarded as one of Hollywood's finest and hardest-working actors.

What can we learn from Samuel L. Jackson's journey?

No one is immune to discouragement.

Regardless of your personality, potential, or position you will encounter discouragement at some point in life.

Our response to discouragement holds the key to our futures.

I've noted two types of people in the world. Splinters and bouncers. When splinters hit the bottom they land with a thud and stick like glue. No matter what you try to say and do, there's no use trying to pick up a splinter who has fallen flat. Bouncers are the other hand, pull themselves together and rebound after hitting the bottom. Give them a little bit of encouragement, and they will ride it back up to the top.

Everyone who hits bottom has a choice. Are you going to get up or give up? The difference between the splinters and bouncers lies in their attitude. Splinters become their own and blame others for their problems. Bouncers learn from their failures and find support to help them recover.

Our influence can be pivotal in moving others from self-doubt to overcoming discouragement.

Imagine if Samuel L. Jackson had not been married, or if the people who cared about him had not intervened on his behalf. He might never have checked into rehab, he might never have beaten his drug addiction, and the world might never have been entertained by his acting. Thankfully for Jackson, he was surrounded by people who loved him and encouraged him as he recovered from substance abuse.

In leadership, inevitably you will cause pain with ministries who do not support what you do, your encouragements can be a lifeline to save them from spending less self-destructive decisions. Here's how you can counteract discouragement:

1) Guide them in the right perspective

People who are discouraged oftentimes seem trapped under a black rain cloud. Everywhere they turn appears to be dark, and they cannot see rays of light anywhere. As a leader, you can point to the positives and help them to keep hope alive. In addition, you can encourage persons to properly interpreting setbacks. Remind them that just because they experienced failure doesn't mean they are a failure.

2) Counsel them to the right people

No one encounter people whom you have limited ability to encourage because you can't relate to their area of discouragement. For instance, if you've never been in sales, it can be hard to cheer up a dispirited salesperson. However, within your network, you may know someone who has undergone similar frustrations to sales and would be glad to share some encouragement from his or her experiences.

Also, the depth of someone's discouragement may overwhelm professional assistance. In the middle of his drug addiction, Samuel L. Jackson didn't need a pep talk from a buddy as much as he needed medical care and attention from a licensed counselor. Sometimes the best service you can do for someone who has hit rock bottom is to persuade him or her to get help.

3) Restore them with the right words

In Norrie Lloyd Jones, as one time the greatest heart surgeon in England, says this in his excellent book, Spirited Impressions: "It's Cancer and Cure": "Wear of your unhappiness in life is due to the fact that you are listening to yourself rather than talking to yourself." Think about it. When you've discouraged, you wake up in the morning and right away, there are streams of thought coming into your mind. You haven't invited them, you didn't ask for them; you are not consciously doing anything to produce them; they just come! They start talking to you.

As a leader, you can help people filter self-centered fears and discouragement by your words and inner dialogue. After doing so, you have the opportunity to speak affirming and encouraging words that can take the place of negative thoughts. Once people change their thinking, their attitudes and actions will follow suit.

Raise your leadership IQ. Attend the 53rd Developing The Leader #DLS1 Biz with Maxwell certified Facilitator Francis Kong August 20-27, 8am-5pm at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel. Call Inspire Leadership Consultancy Corporation, 7-851115. Visit us at www.inspireleaders.com. Add us at Facebook and Twitter

Fashion jewelry and bead making seminar set

MAKING CUSTOM jewelry is a fun and excellent hobby.

It is a wonderful way to relax while creating necklace and bracelet to wear while earring extra cash.

Learn how to string and tie up beads for give away as a gift or for business.

The Golden Treasure Skills Development Program will conduct a one day seminar on fashion jewelry and bead making on August 29. Starting from 10 am to 6 pm to be held at the PTTC Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Nissan Blvd., Manila cor. Sen. Gil Puyat Ave.

Topics to be discussed on sourcing of materials, design and it factors as to entrepreneurship on how to start and maintain a business will also be discussed.

There will be a hands-on experience and participants will be taught the basic ways on how to string up beads and tying up colorful crystals and stones to create/form them into bracelets, earrings, necklaces, anklets, ring, and other accessories using indigenous materials.

Lunch and snack will be served while all the materials for hands-on will be provided.

A certificate of training will be given after the seminar. For questions call 5211377, 4367926, 4337901 and 9136581 or log on to www.goldenTreasureSkills.com

Card rewards, perks win loyalty program

THE EXCEPTIONAL quality of its Membership Rewards Program has been a key factor in retaining the loyalty of affluent American Express Card members, according to officers of the Consumer Lending Group of BDO, the exclusive issuer of American Express Cards in the Philippines.

A card member interested in redeeming free accommodations, for instance, has a wide choice of well-known hotels aligned with Hilton Hhonors, Priority Club, Starwood Preferred Guest or Sirha Amerihah as well as local hotel partners Diamond Hotel and Manahatta Oriental Hotel. When redeeming air miles, American Express card members have also expressed appreciation over the fact that they have five frequent flyer programs to choose from. These include Asia Miles, Emirh, Rich Flyer, Royal Orchid and Malaysia Miles.

Card members are further encouraged by the fact that American Express rewards points don't expire, giving them the option to accumulate points for "indulgent rewards" like free accommodations or the Bulgari Resort in Bali, according to Agnes Aragon, American Express Marketing Head.

In the 2010 issue of 'Incentives,' the American Express Membership Rewards Catalogue, the epitome of luxury offered on "The Platinum Card" members is a stay at the Bali resort set on a pristine 150 meters above sea level. Bulgari Resort Bali makes available unrivaled views of the Indian Ocean as well as opportunities to enjoy up close the collection of exquisite Balinese antiques around the villa complex. Should guests wish to go to the beach, they have access to a special funicular elevator.

However, other rewards while card members like to occasionally indulge themselves, they are at the same time practical. Thus, shopping vouchers to upscale department stores and dining vouchers to well-established restaurants are among frequently redeemed items.

Those are complemented by health and wellness items as well as home and kitchen appliances and gadgets are usually offered by other credit card rewards programs.

Aragon reveals that the most redeemed items include gadgets for health and beauty, as well as Wii and PSP devices. "Because American Express offers meaningful rewards, card members tend to be loyal to the brand," Aragon disclosed.

Not only do American Express Cardmembers enjoy unique Rewards through Incentive, they also have access to special privileges and savings through the Selected Dining program. The program is available to more than 70 countries in North America and the Caribbean, Central and South America, Europe and the Middle East, Asia, Oceania and South Pacific. In the Philippines alone, 275 merchants partners offer savings of up to 50 per cent on some retail items as well as free dishes to American Express Cardmembers who use their credit cards in participating restaurant partners. American Express Cardmembers whose cards were issued in the Philippines are also able to enjoy the same privileges from more than 13,000 merchants worldwide as they travel to any country where tickets is available.

Ma. Nazaree Regala, Head of Marketing of BDO's Consumer Lending Group, observes: "More card members realize that American Express is a door to a world of privileges that can't easily be replicated." In fact, card members, who are usually travelers, are encouraged for their convenience to log on to the global website and to check out the Selects offers awaiting them in each country you travel.

Aside from the Membership and Selects Programs, American Express Cardmembers enjoy unparalleled rewards and values that they have come to expect from American Express to fulfill their affluent lifestyle and spending needs.

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Asians more attuned to fuel . . .

Pretzeage B1

them still lack the resources and knowledge to do so. More than one in three Asian drivers also admit that they do not know how to buy more fuel efficient.

Shell identifies the barriers preventing Asian drivers from buying more fuel-efficient as lack of proper knowledge; belief that they are already as fuel efficient as possible; uncertainty over possible economic benefits.

Despite these, Asian drivers are still more attuned to the economic and environmental benefits of saving fuel compared to their European counterparts. It was found that almost 9 in 10 (87 percent) of Asian drivers still view fuel efficiency as as important way to save money, compared to just 71 percent in Europe.

Asian drivers however remain unsure about how much money they could save and their estimates on potential cost savings vary widely. Only two Malaysian and Thailand believe they could save a substantial amount of money while those in the Philippines, Singapore and Hong Kong estimate just a modest amount.

Growing fuel demand

The need to save on fuel has never been more pressing with experts no issue as it is today as illustrated by the Singapore Institute of International Affairs (SIIA) in its report.

According to Singapore's oldest think tank, global demand for energy is set to double by 2050, when the world's population is likely to grow to over 9 billion, and much of this population growth—and rising energy demand—is expected to take place in Asian countries.

As countries and cities grow, demand for mobility rises in tandem. The number of vehicles on the world's streets is expected to double by 2030, largely due to the exponentially growing car ownership in Asian cities.

In Southeast Asia alone, this number is expected to even triple to 92 million by 2030, according to the International Energy Agency. As it is, the transport sector in the region has become the largest energy consumer and the leading source of carbon emissions and pollution.

With the growing demand for energy, the security of energy supplies has thus become a major concern for many countries.

This is particularly true for many Asian economies, like the Philippines, which are net energy importers and highly vulnerable to the vagaries of the energy supplies. Hence, the search for alternative sources of energy has taken on greater urgency in recent years, it says.

In the Philippines, the Department of Energy has been pushing for alternative sources of energy and fuel, most notably natural gas and renewable energy sources such as wind, solar and hydroelectric power. Cy can fully tap and benefit from these indigenous resources.

So in the meantime, before you even turn on the ignition, try to do your share to save fuel consumers than are fast running out. It won't hurt to follow tips to be a fuel-efficient driver, if it means saving Shallow Bards as well.

Beer firm uses people, people, people instead of location, location, location to sell its lands

SAN MIGUEL Corporation formally announced its foray into real estate via its wholly-owned subsidiary, San Miguel Properties, which aims to fully capitalize on the country's recent surge in property development as well as economic growth.

At the recently concluded Philippine Real Estate Fair (PREF), San Miguel Properties took a major step in re-branding and relaunching itself by announcing its ambitious plans for its current and upcoming projects. Form farther the formal opening of the July fair, San Miguel Properties was at the forefront, circling "Breaking Point" Sen. Ramon Revilla Jr. to officiate the lofty mass and times the event and the public's pants—and later on, fulfilling his role as one of San Miguel Properties' corporate partners, exuberantly and gave speeches.

The first among its ambitious real estate auction efforts is the Montefalcon project. Situated in the town of Antipolo in Albay province, Cavite, this venture is a multifaceted development envisioned to serve as the community's hub for "spiritual tourism." A collaborative brainchild of Fr. Fernando Suarez, and SMC chair and CEO Ramon S. Ang, Montefalcon is envisioned as San Miguel Properties' initial venture into building up the country's role a "spiritual mecca." That is in line with the Department of Tourism's objective to provide quality over quantity when it comes to tourism spots in the country's.

Unofficially dubbed as San Miguel Properties' "New Jerusalem," the project will cover a vast 50-hectare area, with spacious venues for weddings, baptisms, and other religious ceremonies, several retreat houses, and hotel amenities. The resort's biggest venue of the Virgin Mary Rivaling the famous statue of Jesus Christ in Rio de Janeiro and towering over the Tagaytay ridge, the over 100-meter statue will serve as a beacon to attract the faithful from all over Asia, if not the world.

With the "Unity in the Philippines" campaign, San Miguel said promises its projects in faraway Batangas and Baguio. In Batangas, the project will be situated in Puka Beach, an undeveloped 28-hectare strip of white sand. As for Batangas, similarly low-impact projects will be put up, with the different towns being close by to still be hands, and will be like nothing you have ever seen in Asia, if not in the world," Ang promises.

In Baguio, it intends to develop low-impact condotels along Outlook Drive, right between Mines View Park and Baguio Country Club and on clusters of vacation homes set right in the center of a pine forest.

San Miguel Properties also reintroduced to the market its current real estate development: Bel Aldea, Maravilla, and Sharda, in Cavite and Bridgewoods in Sta. Rosa Laguna. It also introduced San Francisco Lakeviews, a development that will recreate the beauty of San Francisco City, USA right in the heart of bustling Cavite.

San Miguel Properties' endeavors for its projects are CNN Hero of the Year 2009, Efren Peñaflorida for Bel Aldea, and lawyer, philanthropist, and author of the best-selling book, "12 Things Every Filipino Can Do to Help the Country," Rina Jimenez-David for Maravilla.

Finally, the company also announced its full support for the global design competition, "Design Against the Elements" at G.I.A.N.T., which is spearheaded by social entrepreneur and inventor and Yoo-Outstanding Young People in the World awardee, Gregg Vitalliano.

Forging a successful franchise venture

POTENTIAL ENTREPRENEURS who wish to successfully venture into a convenient business can benefit from investing in a popular franchise opportunity. But even as a great alternative for would-be business owners, achieving winning results do not automatically come with just a promising brand or huge initial capital.

Congee Grille, a family grill restaurant, makes this statement a resounding experience as it touts the overall success of the organization with its reliable franchise operations system support for its partners.

Since 1999, Congee Grille—which pioneered the "air-conditioned grillery" in the country—has leveled up to become a food destination in the metro.

Brand leadership

By conveniently updating to contemporary trends and products to the latest market trends and customer demand, investors are suffered with an established business strategy that is strengthened by years of industry experience. Leveraging the power of the franchise system is the restaurant's brand marketing in the food industry which provides budding entrepreneurs an even greater edge over competitors.

Via its unique take on family dining—an intellectual element that perpetuates the restaurant's versatile popularity among consumers of various age brackets—Congee Grille's wholesome family dining appeal, spacious suburban-like location and more than 150 authentic cuisine were cynical pieces that ultimately brought the all-Filipino restaurant to its current status now.

In addition to brand recognition, becoming part of a growing organization that is able to provide timely support and commitment in assisting franchisees in maximizing their success is another important element that Congee Grille to its partners. "By clearly communicating them to our partners, the company sets up a healthy foundation where mutual trust and principles of integrity, openness and genuine care for our franchisees and vice versa are cultivated," notes Linda Villanueva, Marketing Manager of Congee Grille.

For instance, in its newly-opened franchise outlet in Shopwise The Mall, Cubao-area, the management team quick to establish positive rapport by providing pre-opening and marketing support that includes marketing collaterals for display such as banners, flyers and tarpaulins and training of store officers, from restaurant supervisor, dining captain to store administrative officer and to house chef.

As for its location, the franchise management also provided assistance in scouting the site and identifying its customer profile, plus construction coordination, with regards the specifications of the floor plan to ensure that the 2500-diner restaurant will decorate the same aesthetic standards of which all Congee Grille company-owned outlets are known for.

The entire floor family diner also offers a roomy veranda and function room for special events such as birthdays and exclusive company parties, to name a few.

Forging successful franchise

"With this immense franchise support, positive, trusting relationships between franchisees and franchisors are forged and eventually success is achieved on both ends," says Villanueva. Those healthy attributes, according to Villanueva, are the core foundation of Congee Grille's franchise family.

Training

Once the application is approved and the franchise contract is executed, the franchisee will undergo an intensive one-month training that will help hone their managerial skills.

The franchising contract will entitle the franchisees to Congee Grille's package of services consists of: opening support (construction, pre-opening support, grand opening support, post opening support, marketing and promotional support, profit and loss statistic, ongoing operational support, continued research and development, and consultation.

"In order to come up with the best tasting cuisine, the chef needs to select and incorporate only good ingredients right at his fingertips. The same thing goes to successful franchisees: you need the best, general business systems, up-to-date information, and continuous management support always on hand," says Villanueva.

Based from the Calmanti.com franchise center, the best-in-grill restaurant has eight stores located in 33 Pueblo, Ortigas Center, Pinagsin Alabang, SM City Fairview, SM City San Lazaro, SM City Clark, SM Mall of Asia, SM City Pampanga, and Festival Mentin, Quezon City. For franchising inquiries, e-mail us franchise@congeegrille.com or log on to www.congeegrille.com.

Firm saves fuel with help of Clinton Initiative

CENTURY PROPERTIES Management Inc. (CPMI), one of the country's largest property management companies, has embarked on a mission to make its managed portfolio of over 40 buildings across the Philippines more energy efficient.

The commitment was marked by a ceremonial signing of the implementation contract on June 18, 2010 between Century Properties Management Inc., Philippines, on behalf of the Pacific Star Condominium Corporation, and TRANE (Philippines) (TRANE), with the Clinton Climate Initiative (CCI) serving as guest witness.

Work has begun on the Pacific Star Building, the 28-year-old, 300,000-square-foot office building in the center of Makati, Manila. By replacing existing chillers with new high efficiency ones from TRANE, the building's total energy consumption will be reduced by 20 percent, while carbon dioxide emissions will be reduced by 1518 tons each year. As part of this project, TRANE has guaranteed that its chillers will reduce energy use and run on a refrigerant that is in line with global environmental standards set out in the Montreal Protocol.

The energy savings will enable the Pacific Star Building to pay back its investment in less than four years. CPMI plans to fit out energy efficient equipment in its remaining managed buildings across the Philippines, with customer from each building's condominium corporation, over the next five years.

The Clinton Climate Initiative (CCI), a project of the William J. Clinton Foundation, is assisting Century Properties on the project through its Energy Efficiency Building Retrofit Program. CCI is providing Century Properties with advice on the various technologies and financial packages available, using global best practice examples, to help improve the building's energy efficiency.

"Century Properties Management, Inc. has made a conscientious effort to incorporate efficient solutions in its portfolio of professionally managed properties. In this particular case, we would serve as champion and lead a consistently growing number of intelligent high-rise buildings within the Philippines in adopting the exact measures to significantly reduce the carbon footprints of its major and critical facilities equipment which performs with cost-effective to pollution and ultimately global warming. And of equivocal relevance, reducing energy cost parallel to implementing the same measures. It is the best way of preservation and if not, it is guarantee to become a precedent," says lady Ana E. S. Antonio, chair and CEO of Century Properties.

Century Properties Management, Inc. (CPMI), a subsidiary of the Century Properties Group, a one of largest property management companies in the Philippines, managing 40 buildings. Incorporated in 1980, CPMI was the first independent property management company to introduce international standards to the local property market.

Trane, is a business of Ingersoll Rand—a multibillion-dollar diversified and consulting solutions, comfortable and energy efficient environments—improves the performance of homes and buildings around the world.

Smoked fish gives couple comfort and wealth

From page B4

"My could not find steady jobs so we pioneered by selling anything," says Yolanda, 58.

From selling, little by little the Garcia were able to acquire capital to put up their single business now called YBG Smoked Fish.

Growing business

They soon tore the smoked fish business because Arsenio used to work as a cinema factory. Five years into the business, their investment began to grow as they attracted more and more buyers, particularly from Abra.

"We started with P50,000 and quite often, we acquired fish from our suppliers through loans," Yolanda says.

Since the 1980s, their smoked fish business has been selling thousands of bangus, the round bonfires down the set signature consumers of smoked fish.

Every binasy runs between P90 and P200 and contains four to five pieces of fish.

With only six employees back in 1980, YBG Smoked Fish now has 30 employees who are tasked with preparing bangus, tamsilo, 31, and Yolanda could oversee the operations.

"My husband wakes up at 3 a.m. every day to oversee the making of the sinapa, while I wake up at 5 a.m. to help," says Yolanda. "After that, we sleep at around 9 a.m. then wake up at 1 p.m. to buy fish."

Their daily grind consists of buying fish, usually weak (pataganggang), at the fish market in this town and Urdaneta City. The fresh fish is then cured in the patio (fish cure), boiled and finished.

"We then sell the sinapa to locals who sell them in nearby markets," Yolanda says.

The Garcia couple's hard work had been rewarded as they managed to send all their three children to college, with their eldest son, at 30, graduating recently from medical school.

A WORKER shows off the smoked fish that will be sold in markets, readers

"There are some sacrifices you have to make in order to achieve your goals," Yolanda says.

The family, who used to live in a shanty, now lives in their own concrete house at the heart of the town. The Garcia have also started venturing on apartment units and have acquired real estate and vehicles through selling bangus.

"It's a business that ensured from starting to provide a better life for our children," says Yolanda.

The abc's of real estate investing

LECTURES ON how to succeed in real estate will be conducted by the Urban Institute of Real Estate for prospective investors, developers, landowners and realty professionals.

The new series unveiled by the institute of Real Estate Studies, is on Apr. 28, 8:30 to 6 p.m. at the Insular Life Corporate Center, 6th Avenue, Bonifacio St., Makati City.

The topics are as follows:

Sept. 8—Investing in Real Estate: Opportunities, Techniques and What are Needed to Succeed in Real Estate Investing;

Sept. 13—Legal Aspects of Real Estate Loans with Documentation;

Sept. 20—How to's of Property Development with HLURB Rules;

Sept. 27—Joint Ventures and Syndications for Real Estate Projects;

Oct. 4—How to Manage and Maximize Income of Rental Properties;

Oct. 11—Real Estate Taxation;

Oct. 18—Property Valuation: How to do it Yourself; and

Oct. 25—Making Big Money in Distressed Properties.

The lecture series will be handled by Engr. Benito S. Cruz, who has more than 40 years in real estate, engineering, construction, management and education, together with Atty. Red Kimbo K. Cruz III.

For other details or advance registration, Urban Institute may be reached at 3097402, 7968005, 0917-8680705, or 3939-1237/02, or by e-mail at urbaninst@gmail.com, or visit urban institute.blogspot.com.

Pottery-making makes women . . .

From page B4

cility and brings them to potential buyers.

"We also accept orders from individuals and other businesses," says Erlina.

The profits are shared by the women and their employees, although they also appoint amounts from the revenue for the shop's upkeep.

A typical working day for the women begins with group work. They collect and clean their wares over raw clay which is shaped in daily by a delivery truck. This is preparation work before a machine crushes the grains of clay into a fine powder. The finely ground earth will go through another machine that processes the clay so that it turns into a state of uniform thickness.

The clay will then be put into a mold where it will remain for a day until it is ready for a three-day drying period under direct sunlight.

Finally, the molded pot or stove will be roasted over a pit made of dried grass and bamboo.

Because the facility is housed inside a public elementary school, interested students get to learn how to do the craft by observing the work being done by the women.

"I'm glad that we have this kind of business here, because it's really helpful to us who are in need of other sources of livelihood," says Erlina.

WORKERS of the TBC Smoked Fish in Rosales, Pangasinan, prepare tinapa for distribution to public markets and wholesalers in Pangasinan and nearby provinces.

Sunday BIZ

Smoked fish gives couple comfort and wealth

Text and photos by Johanna Mendoza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

ROSALES, PANGASINAN—Artemio and Yolanda Galeth, a Pangasinan couple who struggled through vending, changed their life with hard work, persistence and a dose of business savvy.

Both only high school graduates, they have established the most successful tinapa (smoked fish) business amid a thriving industry in Barangay Carmen West here.

The Galeths started as vendors of anything one could possibly imagine—butter (boiled dark eggs), pusô (a rustic comfort), tapairons, rice cake, chicken and pork, even televisions and motorcycles.

SMOKED 62

SMOKED glutinous (sticky) Sarlum rice delicacies and Tilapia fillets, former vendors plying the streets of Rosales, Pangasinan.

Pottery-making makes women busy, earn a decent living

Text and photos by Johanna Mendoza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

SAN NICOLAS, PANGASINAN—To have a better life is everybody's dream, and Lydia Bibat is no exception.

Bibat is a 54-year-old homemaker from Barangay Sto. Tomas here who grew up in a family steeped in pottery and who was able to finish only high school.

After spending most of her life taking care of her husband, who is a farmer, and their eight children, a chance to make her own living presented itself in the form of a pottery-making seminar held by the Department of Labor and Employment in 2008 for the unemployed wives of this town.

> Bibat eagerly grabbed the chance to go into business

Bibat eagerly grabbed this opportunity and joined the Rural Improvement Club (RIC) of her village when it opened a pottery-making facility at an abandoned building in the Sto. Tomas Elementary School that same year.

The project's goal of providing housewives additional income was a success as it allowed women like Bibat to earn P100 by helping out each day in the production of clay flower pots and stoves.

Bibat is grateful for this source of income as it allows her to share with her husband the burden of caring for their family.

"I get to buy small things necessary at home like soap and to give allowance to my new youngest children who are still studying," she says.

"My husband's earnings are not enough to support our family so it makes me happy to be able to help," she adds.

Bibat works with 39 other women from nine villages here who were also employed as workers in the pottery-making facility. Work for a certain day of the week is assigned to every village, so that every community is provided a chance to earn.

Pottery-making is a long and arduous process, so Bibat works with five other women from her village, as well as two men hired by the RIC to handle the heavy machinery.

Their products include ceramic flower pots, which come in four sizes. The largest pots are sold for P18 while the smallest pots are sold for P5. Their clay stoves are sold sell for as much as P200 each.

Bibat says the P10 flower pot has been their bestselling item.

The women can produce as many as 300 pieces of assorted earthenware a day.

Pottery is a flourishing industry especially in the rainy season when planting season starts, as an official of the Department of Agriculture picks up products from the la

IT takes a lot of time, effort and skills to make pots, but the women of San Nicolas are up to the task.

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Sunday BIZ

Taking subscribers where you want, need them to go

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

IT WAS the giant broadcast network ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. and GMA Network that forced mobile communications leader Smart Communications Inc. into a new marketing direction.

Smart executive division head Sherlin Mojica tells the business in an interview that Smart usually relies on advertising with the top two networks to get its messages and promotions across to its 45 million subscribers and potential customers from rival telecommunications companies.

But when the advertising rates jacked up in the first few months of the year to the point of straining Smart's considerable advertising budget, the mobile subsidiary of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. had to come up with a new game plan. And fast.

"So we went back to the drawing board to see what we can do and not rely too much on the top networks to share our message," says Mojica.

The result of many days and nights of brain wracking and numbers crunching is the Touch Sabay 'Buti (TST) promotion where Smart and Talk and Text subscribers get a chance to win as much as P1 million in cash every week.

To earn raffle entries, subscribers must download trivia by answering questions that will be flashed in select primetime television shows of "Kapuso" Channel 7, another company under the helm of PLDT chair Manuel V. Pangilinan. Subscribers are charged 1 TST point per trivia download, the trivia download is equal to one raffle entry.

Everybody who loads Smart and Talk and 'Buti credits gets "TST" points that can be used to participate in the promotion. Prepaid subscribers, on the other hand, will be charged 50 centavos to answer TV5 trivia questions via text. Infinitext will be able to get free TST points by loading any SMART Buddy and Talk 'N Text electronic load variants.

Mojica says that the significant prizes on stake, which will come up to a combined P100 million, should encourage Smart and Talk and Text subscribers to switch television loyalties—at least during primetime—to Channel 7, thus helping both companies make Pangilinan's ecosystem rich.

The thinking behind TST, he says, is that instead of Smart going to an advertising agency and then airing advertisements in the hope of reaching subscribers, Smart will now go direct to its subscribers and give them enough incentives to go to a space—like a television show—where they will get their messages from the company.

This way both Smart and Channel 7 stand to reap significant benefits.

By encouraging subscribers to watch the shows on Channel 7, ratings are expected to shoot up. And thus for Smart, the promotion presents a cost-effective way to reach 36 subscribers and keep them loyal, which remains a challenge given the fierce competition among telecommunica-

TURN TO

HOSTS of TV5's "Party na 5," Lucy Torres-Gomez, Richard Gomez and John Estrada, right after announcing the prize money for Unmasked Formula, a "happened" from Barangay Pook Lima in Binan, Laguna

HIKVLCD volunteers serve as trainers during the Teacher Education Project.

Public school teachers go high tech

PUBLIC SCHOOL teachers may get updated on relevant computer knowledge courtesy of the Manila Electric Company.

Through its corporate social responsibility program called the Teacher Education Project (TEP), Meralco annually selects beneficiaries from various business centers and sectors where it operates.

One of the TEP beneficiaries for 2010 is the San Juan National High School, Ground 22 teachers took the four-week training course at the Meralco compound in Ortigas, Pasig City.

The same number of teachers from the Tipas National High School also benefited from the project.

Jerry Lazaro, 35, who teaches music, arts, physical education, and health to freshman students at the San Juan National High School, said he and his colleagues were pleased to be given the chance to update their computer knowledge.

He said they appreciated the modules on MS Word, Powerpoint, Excel and the basics of internet surfing as useful tools that would benefit them professionally and personally.

"By college, my computer-literate course only involved Photoshop, and we didn't even use it because back then," Lazaro said. "I can say I have some knowledge on using the computer, but the modules from the TEP served as a refresher course for me."

The participants' ages range from the 30s to the 50s. The younger teachers learned the advantages of the software applications, notably the Excel program for organizing and computing the students' grades, and the Powerpoint for making presentations.

The teachers' new knowledge will also help in the management of their households.

The Meralco employees who served as TEP trainers taught them how to use Excel to compare the household budgets and even the power consumption of their appliances, thus helping them find ways to cut costs.

"My coteachers are very excited. Now they use e-mail and chat, and even open a Facebook account," Lazaro said.

He described the volunteer trainers as "very gracious."

"Dad, since the training was done on a one-on-one basis, everyone learned very fast. They helped us every step of the way and were very patient with us," he said.

Allan Perez, team leader of the Civil Design and Construction unit of the Meralco subdivision in San Joaquin, Pasig, was among the trainers.

He said the group's batch was very eager to learn, which made the daylong sessions enjoyable for all.

For details on Meralco's CSR programs, visit www.meralco.com.ph.

Future Homes come Today through BFSB

Pamapasa top developers with BPI Family Savings Bank officers (L-R) Atty. Ruben Ocampo, BFSB Business Center Head for Pampanga; VP Rico Santos, Area Business Director of BPI; Area Trustee Executive, BFSB President Assistant Jane Uriarte; Business Sales Head for Northern Luzon, Felimon Jose Cruz; VP-Retail Assets, BFSB Head of Direct Loans, Marnie Peralta; Area Manager/Director, Arnulfo Dizon Cruz; Project Marketing Head Jhonn Sembrano; Globe Assistant Realty Holdings Dirt. Corp.; Bye Retail Operations Sr. Marketing Supervisor Camille Commodore Pamapasa; EVP Jocelyn Ong, Area Head of Retail Mortgage Division of BFSB; and SVP Enrique Talavera, BFSB Business Development Officer for Housing Loans

A house is a dream purchase that many would be difficult to achieve in this world.

BPI Family Savings Bank (BFSB), provides easy ways for Filipinos to get their dream homes. "Our business is making building homes and building dreams. We hope to uplift the lives of the Filipino families by making it easy for them to avail their dream homes with our affordable loan products and services," shares BPI Family Savings Bank President Jose Teodoro Limcaoco.

To reach more Filipinos nationwide, BFSB partners in terms of Housing Markets, an event that brings together real estate developers under one roof to offer special deals and attractive rates for people looking to rent a house or condominium.

This year, BFSB Housing Markets already partnered with the leading developers of Bacolod, Iloilo, Cagayan de Oro and Pampanga to showcase affordable housing loan packages to their local clients. In the country, concluded Grand Housing Markets in Pampanga, BFSB partnered with high-profile developers Alviar Land Corp., Arcilla Land Corp., Ayala Land Premier, Camella Communities, Filinvest Land Corporation, Globe Asteljan Realty Holdings Corp., Sorsogon Residences by Standard Dev't. Corp., St. Catherine Realty Corp., The Heritage Place by ABCD Realty & Dev't. Corp., The Lakeshore by Central Country Estate, Inc., and Wonderpave Park by Landco Pacific Corporation, all of which offered exclusive housing deals.

With BFSB's investing and advertising advantages, customers have more choices. And today is the best time to do both. "Through our Housing Markets, we are helping more Filipino family become encouraged to their dream homes. And in their dream homes," concluded Assistant Vice Asst. Senior Vice President (Head of Retail Mortgage Division of BPI Family Savings Bank.

For more information, email housing@mail.bpi.com.ph or call your nearest BPI or BFSB branch.

BFSB VP Talavera, BFSB President Ignacio, the Grand Housing Markets event in Pampanga

Taking subscribers . . .

From page B4

done companies.

"Instead of Mohammad going to the mountain, the mountain will go to Mohammad," Shipley explains.

The TST promoters will not resist the end-of-the-day sales and leave spokespersons to answer subscriber queries. He clarifies as that "gets lost a lot of momentum in customer journeying this innovative approach."

"It will take some time for something new to gain momentum so we have to be very attentive to it," Ishewa adds. "But as start-up, we are very pleased."

Officials are also under way to do later-season ago other companies and broads to ensure similar promotions through Smart.

Shipley feels that the TST promotion has the team came up with has the potential to turn the advertising world on its head, because it means that "interactive" campaigns—where consumers get to take part in some way in the promotion—have come of age.

TST first major winner Marilyn Bargoles of Zamboanga Sibugay

Globe Telecom will launch iPhone 4, the thinnest smartphone in the world with the highest resolution display ever built into a phone, in the Philippines in the coming months. To register your interest and be the first know more information about the iPhone 4's availability, please visit www.globe.com.ph. For more information on iPhone 4 please visit www.apple.com/iphone.

PORSCHE, AUDI ADD TOUCH OF CLASS TO PIMS

The 3rd Philippine International Motor Show (PIMS) at the World Trade Center gets an additional touch of class and prestige through a series of activities to be presented by PGA Cars, the exclusive distributor of European power brands Porsche and Audi in the Philippines.

Setting a prime front row spot at the World Trade Center Manila, the Porsche and Audi Pavilions will showcase two cars from Porsche and four cars from Audi and will surely impress and catch the attention of thousands of potential car enthusiasts and the everyday car buffs who are expected to visit the exhibit.

The DNA of speed and beauty will be showcased via the Porsche 911 Turbo, the luxurious four-seater Panamera Turbo, the exceptional twin Supercar Turbo and the sporty individuality of the 911 GT3 RS.

Along with the Porsche line up, the most successful Audi sedans will be shown this Audi A4, the handmade crafted Audi A5, the perfectly synchronized and multi-awarded offroad vehicle the Audi Q5, and the supercar built with powerful drive – the Audi R8 V10.

THE FAST AND THE BEAUTIFUL

The popularity of Porsche as a machine of both speed and beauty will be highlighted at the Porsche Pavilion. On display is the Porsche 911 Turbo, famous for its six-cylinder twin-turbo boxer engine with a maximum torque of 500Nm at 1,950 to 5,000 rpm, the Panamera Turbo which is defined by a 4.8 liter V8 twin-turbo Direct Fuel Injection (DFI) engine and 7-speed Porsche Doppelkupplung transmission and the Porsche's dynamic SUV, the Cayenne Turbo.

Also taking the spotlight is the 911 GT3 RS, this sports car with a 3.8-liter 6-cylinder boxer engine enhanced by Variocam timing which produces 408 horsepower and 410 Nm of torque, thus catapulting the GT3 RS to 100 km/h from a standstill in just 4.0 seconds.

PREMIUM AUTOMOBILES OF AUDI

Premium car lovers flock gets an equal share of the limelight at the Audi Pavilion with a series of sedans that can only spell prestige and exclusivity to its buyers.

These are the Audi A4 2.0 TDI which is a 4-door executive sedan with an 8-speed multitronic gearbox and torque that peaks at 320 Nm at a range of 1,750 to 2,500 rpm, the Audi A5 Coupe 2.0 TFSI quattro which lives up to as much as 330 Nm at 2,500 to 5,000 rpm and the Audi Q5 3.0 TDI 176 kW quattro off-roader powered by an engine torque that goes up to 350 Nm at 1,500 to 4,200 rpm.

Highlighting the Audi roster is the Audi R8 Coupe 5.2 FSI quattro. The R8 V10 is defined by its 0-to-100 km/h speed and exceptional torque of 530 Nm at 6,800 rpm.

The PGA Cars Porsche and Audi Pavilions at the 3rd Philippine International Motor Show at the World Trade Center will be open to the public on Aug. 19 to 22 from Thursday Aug. 19 open Sunday Aug. 22.

LEADING ORGANIZATIONS ENDORSE IIP 2010

From left: Dr. Alfonso Ely of the Federation of the Filipino Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FFCCCII); Wang Guiping of the China Chamber of Commerce for Import and Export of Machinery and Electronic Products (CCME); Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Undersecretary Cristino Panlilio; Jimmy Chua of the Federation of Electronics Suppliers and Manufacturers of the Philippines; Zhongping Wu of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China; and Emilio Abaya, Chair of the Philippine Association of Telecom Telephone Companies (Papstelco) cut the ribbon cutting ritual to welcome visitors and exhibitors to the show. This gathering of the key leaders from various sectors signified the wide number of industries covered in the show. More than 250 local and foreign digital content and industry providers are participating in the show, which is organized by Synovis Integration Philippines, the country's largest and most comprehensive business solutions and technologies expo, held at the SMX Convention Center yesterday. Now on its 8th year, Synovis Integration Philippines is bringing a technology showcase that is bigger than ever with more than 100 booths under its banner. The seven sub-shows, each with a specialized industry focus, include Comm World (telecom and IT), Corporate Gifts Expo (premium gifts and promotional materials), Digital Electronics World (consumer electronics and gadgets), MEDHH (pro audio and video equipment), The YOPPI Show (office products and services), Signs and Media World (signage and multi-media technology), and Edutech Expo (educational and methodology technology). Entrance to the expo is absolutely free. The 3-day show is open to the public on Aug. 19 until 10 hour 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and August 21 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. For more information about the show, you may contact the event organizer, Global Link Exhibition Specialist Inc at tel. no. (632) 708-8388, fax (632) 501-4585. Visitors will also be treated to special conferences and seminars during the exhibit. The Audio Engineering Society (AES) Philippine Chapter will also be holding seminars on Audio and Acoustics Fundamental Technologies and Applications. For interested fans, visitors can attend any of the seminar modules that they are especially keen of for the show. For more information about the seminars, please contact 421-1750 or 415-1434.

ROADTALK Sunday
LIFE DEFINED BY THE ROADS WE TAKE
E-mail: enginesoul@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Arlen Rupinta

Safe driving is defensive driving

Text and photos by Michelle Valera

On the road, attitude is everything.

Most accidents that occur in our **streets and highways are usually** brought by improper behavior when driving. News about a commuter bus colliding with a truck, a car crashing on a building, or a modest bus plunging off the bridge or a cliff are more often a result of aggressive driving. Over-speeding, rapid acceleration, and sudden breaking are common causes of road mishaps that often result in devastating injuries and horrible deaths.

Hence, there is a need for stronger safe driving campaigns to continue educating motorists and drivers on the dangers of a hostile road attitude. Losing your cool can mean a death sentence if one is not careful enough. The situation can be worse if you are behind the wheel of the most unpredictable driver. Obviously road safety is a national concern, and an importance one at that. Maintaining a calm and composed mind set when driving is a big start towards addressing it.

Total Philippines Corp has an ongoing campaign titled Gearing Up for Road Safety that currently promotes responsible driving to its employees. The company believes that "whipping a positive and mental approach to driving is a must." Moreover, a driver must be fully capable to identify personal and immediate hazards on the road, predict the actions of other road users, and decide on what to do to avoid an unsafe situation.

Furthermore, Total shares some other helpful tips that many drivers often neglect but are actually crucial to all travel adventures:

1. Check the exteriors and interiors. Drivers should make sure that the rear view and side mirrors are properly adjusted so that they can see other cars and pedestrians clearly. Also, the car interior must be kept free of any clutter that may jam the pedals. Something as simple as a book or a toy may get in the way of the brakes.

2. Wear seatbelts. Some drivers take neglect to put on the seatbelt, especially when traveling a short distance. But wearing of seatbelts is not only against the law but it can lead to really bad accidents should an accident happen so better be careful than sorry.

3. Check important gadgets. The road condition of the car cannot be seen on the dashboard so a monthly check, at the very least, on things such as the headlights and the wipers is advisable as the driver can ensure that they are in good working condition when needed.

4. Drive in good condition. Ultimately, it all comes down to the driver. Motorists should try to avoid driving when they have a condition that will prevent them from doing so to their best such as sickness, injury, alcohol intake or even a really

worst mood. Some accidents are personal, and the more emotionally unstable a driver is, the more catastrophic the consequences can be.

At the end of the day, defensive driving is the surest way to ensure road safety, like a good strategy off a very offensive game plan. In sports, a good defense can win championships. On the road, it saves lives.

Suzuki Kizashi concept car in CAMPI motorshow

AS PART of its participation in the upcoming Campi motorshow, Suzuki Philippines will be showcasing the Kizashi Sports concept car. Themed "Drive the Green Road," Campi's 2nd Philippine International Motorshow is scheduled at the World Trade Center in Pasay City from Aug. 19 to 22.

Unveiled at the New York Auto Show 2008, the Kizashi Sports concept car is the final version of the Kizashi concept car series, with the production model due for release this 2011 in other countries.

In Japanese, kizashi means "a sign of great things to come"—signifying the unparalleled combination of driver satisfaction, looks and quality of Suzuki's new flagship model as it breaks into the executive car segment with a compelling new type of sedan.

The development concept behind the Suzuki Kizashi aims to create an emotionally appealing sedan for active people, emphasizing five key points: (1) exterior sportiness combined with interior elegance; (2) European-tuned handling; (3) smoothness and quietness; (4) superior engine performance and fuel efficiency; and (5) stability through Suzuki's 4WD system for 4WD model.

Developed for the global market, Suzuki engineers tuned and tuned the Kizashi to handle diverse driving conditions such as the cold weather trials in Minnesota, hot weather trials in Death Valley. The brakes were tuned in the Swiss Alps; handling was perfected on challenging country roads in the United Kingdom, and on the autobahns and the Nurburgring in Germany. The 4AWD system was tested in New Zealand.

In its exterior design, the Suzuki Kizashi achieves a seamless mold European styling and Japanese craftsmanship. Its bold, aggressive stance is complemented by 18 inch aluminum wheels for a commanding look that bespeaks sophistication and performance.

Inside is expertise in compact car space efficiency is reflected in the optimized roominess of the cabin interior, enriched with high quality upholstery, elegant instrument panel, and automatic air conditioning system.

The Suzuki Kizashi available abroad is powered by a 2.4-liter DOHC engine that delivers maximum powers of 180hp/6000rpm and torque of 170lb-ft/4000rpm, mated to either a CVT (continuously variable transmission) or a 6-speed manual transmission. However, only the automatic transmission version will be available for local distribution. Moreover, reinforced MacPherson strut front suspensions and multilink rear suspension deliver nimble handling with excellent stability.

Outstanding safety technologies have also been built into the Suzuki Kizashi. These include daytime running lights, anti-lock brakes, electronic braking force distribution, and tire pressure monitoring.

Suzuki's proprietary TICT (Total Effective Control Technology) concept was applied in the reinforced body design.

Filipino motoring enthusiasts are sure to have a treat when they visit the Kizashi display at the 3rd Philippine International Motorshow at the World Trade Center from Aug. 19 to 22. Also featured on display are their bestsellers namely the Suzuki Celerio, Swift, APV Type J and their newly-launched SX4 Aero and SX4 Crossover models.

Sunday BIZ

Eating and profiting from food they love

By Lynett Villaflor

VEGGIE FOODS have come a long way from the lechazane—and unappetizing—veggie burgers of the fast-food eighties. It was hard for busy individuals with no time to cook to stay on healthy foods.

Today, health and environmental challenges have brought vegetarian (no meat) and even vegan (no dairy) diets back to dining conversations. For years, the process food industry and consumer watchdog groups have ignored these concerns in favor of providing affordable yet artificial food for all.

Despite increasing demand, there are not enough producers in the country willing to take on wholesale production of natural and organic foods. Although the global market for organic food is among the fastest growing grocery categories, with sales expanding at more than 10 percent annually, local entrepreneurs do not see enough incentives for the economic barriers to break out to the island.

Amy's Kitchen, America's leading brand for frozen organic food, is coming to fill the void in a country where consumers have limited options in processed fast-food and artificially preserved snacks.

Ready-to-cook natural organic meals found only in natural food stores are making the jump from niche market to mainstream as supermarket shelves initially in Boston's and Shopwise. Amy's Philippine distribution is optimistic that local health-conscious consumers will take the line as did their counterparts in other Asian and American cities.

Rob Hill, Amy and Andy Berliner

Success story

The story of America's number one provider of quick-cooking natural organic foods is no thrill a house for aspiring entrepreneurs on how to spot a trend and create a thriving business, with annual revenue now totaling $279 million.

The brand is now part of America's fitness bandwagon having been featured and endorsed by health advocates, athletes and fitness buffs in media, including The Doctors and Oprah on TV.

Founders Rachel and Andy Berliner of Northern California are among sixteen remarkable entrepreneurs, featured in a new book The Path Taken, authored by Jim and Renee Hanan, who have built hugely successful multimillion-dollar companies. The book spots the common traits and strategies that led to their successes.

Where Amy's started out in 1987, it didn't set out to become the United States' leading natural and organic frozen food brand. All the Berliners wanted to do was create a business that would allow them to earn a living by providing convenient and tasty natural vegetarian meals for people like them. selves, who appreciated good food, but were often too busy to cook "from scratch."

Or, their website, www.amyskitchen.com, they say, "We started on a 'shoestring,' using our own house and barn as headquarters. The founding meetings were held in the barn room where we were married and where our daughter Amy was born."

Starting with potpie

From real ingredients that people use in their kitchens, Andy and Rachel came up with their first product: A delicious vegetable potpie that became an instant success.

Andy and Rachel Berliner were quick to launch organic vegetarian frozen meals when they realized that more and more consumers were trying healthier diets.

Since then, Amy's Kitchen Inc. has created over 80 frozen meals, including pizzas, veggie burgers, pocket sandwiches, entrees, snacks, and double meals.

As demand for their products rose, they were surprised that they were being eaten not only by vegetarians and those interested in natural foods, but by millions of people looking for easy-to-prepare meals that really tasted good.

It wasn't until big chains, such as Kroger, started carrying frozen health foods in the late 1990s that Amy's business really took off. They introduced a grocery line that now includes canned soups, beans and chili, as well as jarred pasta sauces and salsas. Sales grew 75 percent in 1998, to $32 million, after Kroger Stores in Denver and other grocers started placing orders.

In packaging entrees that Amy's uses only certified organic ingredients, including vegetables, grains and fruits grown without pesticides. It addresses a wide range of dietary issues.

> 'It is their customers' support that keeps them going'

flies are used sparingly and selectively; all dairy ingredients are made with pasteurized hormone-free milk and do not contain animal enzymes or animal extract. No dish contains meat, fish, shellfish, pending eggs or gelatin. All products are vegetarian; and most contain no preservatives.

The company supplies products in the United States, Canada, Australia, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Mexico, South Korea, Thailand, Israel, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and soon in the Philippines, out of its food plant in Santa Rosa, California.

A family business

After 23 years, Amy's Kitchen is still a family business, with every member of the family taking part. For two decades, the Berliners carefully nurtured the company as well as their child, paying extensive attention to every aspect of its day-to-day activities and providing the vision that has made Amy's so successful.

With Andy, now 61, as CEO and Rachel, 55, as head of marketing, the 1,000-employee company sells 145 vegetarian products, such as frozen black-bean tamales, to known US chains.

Andy was formerly a large shareholder and president of Maple Mountain Herb Tea company, the first herbal tea widely distributed in supermarkets when he founded his own business.

Rachel was raised in a family that ate and grew organic food in the 1950s, long before rising to vote popular. Apart from a life-long orientation toward natural foods, Rachel also has an arts background, and serves as the company's art director, overseeing all packaging design.

The couple's daughter, Amy—from the name year in the company that bears her name—is now a college student at Stanford. She is very much a part of the business and is often present at decision-making discussions. In summer, she goes to the plant and works on the burrito and packaging lines, as well as coordinates content to her dad's blog on the website www.amyskitchen.com.

The success of the brand is summed up in a review blog on the business: "Amy's celebrates big on flavor, while sticking to its organic roots."

Be a family content to remaining a family business "that supports our values and pays Amy's kitchen," it is their customers' support that keeps them going as they look forward to Amy taking over the business after her studies at Stanford.

Bamboo craft provides small town option to earn

HOOKED! Banigued weaves bamboo into a fruit basket.

By Johanna Mordeo
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BALAMBOK, IMUGINIAN—At the village of Panina in the central Sierra Madre town, some 200 families have turned to bamboo in spurring economic activities among residents who mostly depend on agriculture to survive.

Barangay Panina plays host to a thriving bamboo handicraft industry that produces woven baskets and mats.

"This is what our barangay is known for. People from nearby towns and from as far as Laoag City [in Ilocos Norte] come here to buy our products," says Panina Barangay captain Nardeo Valdez Jr.

The village's bamboo weavers produce different types of fruit baskets (dilis) and round or bamboo mats.

Modesto Banigued, 62, a bamboo weaver for more than 20 years, says fruit baskets are sold at P4 each, while bamboo mats cost P90 to P98 per spread.

"We never run out of buyers because what we make are essential for other businesses to work," says Banigued.

The fruit baskets sold to the supermarkets are commonly used by fruit gatherers and farmers for the delivery and storage of their produce, while bamboo mats are often bought by traders who use them to dry fish, hot noodles and by people who need cool floor for their homes.

Business is brisk during the fruit harvesting months of November to May, Banigued says.

Banigued, who could weave at least 20 baskets a day, tells his products to villagers who are into the buy-and-sell trade, and who in turn bring them to the town market.

"I've put my children through college with the money I earned from making bamboo baskets," says Banigued.

Villagers organized the Panina Multipurpose Cooperative in 1991 to support the local bamboo handicraft industry.

Members can borrow money from the cooperative so they can buy raw materials to make the trade.

"Bamboo is expensive, costing P180 to P200 apiece," says Renato Aquino, 68, a member of the cooperative for over 10 years.

Materials used in the products may come from the villagers' backyards, but mostly these are bought from suppliers.

Aquino has borrowed as much as P15,000 from the cooperative, which he would pay within six months.

"The cooperative has been very helpful because we cannot afford to raise capital," says Aquino, who tills the land during the planting season so he could earn extra.

The cooperative accumulates money through the P525 membership fee and the interest collected from loans, he says.

Valdez says the Australian government had donated funds for the cooperative's capital and for the construction of its building and the purchase of a delivery truck.

As a homegrown industry, the skill of weaving bamboo baskets and mats has been passed down from one generation to the next. Aquino says many of the village's children learn how to weave baskets and mats.

"By the age of 7, my children already knew how to make dilis and sawali," he says. "Children here see their parents making handicraft and copying them."

With this tradition and with the help of the cooperative, Valdez believes that Panina's bamboo handicraft trade would flourish and sustain the 18 lagers for many years to come.

Globe GCASH: Changing the way Filipinos shop and pay online

FIVE YEARS ago, 40-year-old working mom Jessica Hurtado never imagined that her passion for online shopping would lead to where she is now—an independent supplier of important materials for beads and clay enthusiasts all over the country.

Every day Jessica plays the role of an efficient and reliable editorial assistant at a media outfit. But once at home, Jessica logs into her Multiply account and starts taking orders from her very loyal clientele.

Jessica started as a buyer at e-Bay Philippines where she often shopped for clothes, bags and accessories. Later, however, she decided to also try her hand at selling stuff. With no idea what to do, Jessica turned to the Net for inspiration where she stumbled upon a clay making site. "I wanted to find a way to supplement my income and be productive at my time. And since I also seemed to be different, I took up beads as clay making. Then soon when I realized that there's a big market for it. So from there, miss-to-be na," she said.

Jessica's first site is ligandclays.multiply.com where she displays the crafts that she herself makes. Later on, she came up with beader-shaft.multiply.com which caters to those who are on the lookout for beading materials not available locally. Jessica also has bargain hunts exclusively for imported accessories as well as for uniquely done giveaways with her signature touch.

There are about 13,000 registered Filipino sellers on Multiply

When she was still a buyer, Jessica had to pay through the bank for her online purchases since e-Bay sellers do not accept credit cards. "It was such a hassle since the only time I can go to the bank was during lunch which means I had to cut my lunch hour in half," she said.

However, when she became a seller herself, Jessica realized that online sellers in the Philippines especially micro-entrepreneurs will hardly access without alternatives to bank payments. That made Jessica decide to explore the possibility of using GCASH which happened to be a favorite mode of payment among Multiply sellers.

Although it began as a social networking site, Multiply has later on built a considerable niche for online sellers especially in the Philippines which, in turn, contributed to the growth of mobile payment options such as GCASH. Right now, there are about 13,000 registered Filipino sellers on Multiply.

GCASH is an electronic wallet which allows Globe and TM subscribers to easily send and receive money using their cell phones. They can also use their GCASH wallet to pay for goods and services and settle their bills at participating establishments through an easy-to-navigate GCASH menu embedded in their SIM cards.

Jessica said that her customers especially those in the provinces such as Cagayan de Oro, Iloilo, Cebu, and General Santos demand for payment through GCASH due to the convenience it provides.

Most of our buyers get turned off if we do not offer GCASH as a payment option because if they pay through the bank, there is a P100 service fee whereas in GCASH, there is none. Of course, they want to cut cost so they try to avoid paying extra," Jessica explained.

In Jessica's case, about 95 percent of her transactions are in GCASH while the rest are in bank deposits.

"Most online sellers prefer GCASH because it is fast and efficient. For instance, I can receive the payment within seconds and I can directly check and verify if the payment has already been sent by the buyer. Also, with GCASH you can cash in anytime and anywhere without any surcharge," she said.

Since the buyer shoulders all the risks when paying through GCASH, Jessica advised them to make sure that the online sellers are trustworthy before sending any funds especially for high-ticket items.

Globe, on the other hand, said that to ensure security of transactions, prospective buyers may call the 24/7 GCASH Hotline 2892 and free from their Globe cellphones or 7392892 from any landline to verify the GCASH number given them. GCASH has a list of registered subscribers whose identities are already established.

For safe, secure and convenient shopping, Globe also encourages both buyers and sellers to utilize GCASH 2Do, a facility that integrates online payment via SMS with a pick up and delivery service via Lalamove. With GCASH 2Do, Lalamove will pick up and deliver the purchased item while letting the payment temporarily until the merchandise is accurately received and accepted by the buyer.

"THE SPOLIARIUM" by Juan Luna covered 30 feet-undergoing its 127-year-old canvas

Why did they move the 'Spoliarium'?

By John L. Silva
Contributor

In just two months, the former board of 11th-hour appointees had moved the national art treasure and emptied the Senate Hall

LAST AUG. 5, the National Museum board led by director Jeremy Barns resigned en masse, after President Aquino had revoked midnight appointments by the Macapagal-Arroyo administration.

Two days later I made my way to the museum to see and document the changes that had been made by the Macapagal-Arroyo-appointed board.

The first serious omission committed by it, I believe, was the simple but important matter of explanatory labels. In any major museum, a work of art or artifact removed from the wall or from its case, must be replaced with labels to explain where the object is, usually on loan or being restored.

Prized artifacts such as the Maranggal Jar, the Mactan burial jars, a very rare Ming blue-and-white dish with a flying elephant illustration, a 16th-century astrolabe and San Diego Captain Antonio Morga's gold-hilted sword were removed from their cases for a June 14 exhibit in the National Gallery of Art, across the street.

Those objects are main museum draws.

Yet, it's close to two months and so many visitors have seen only empty cases and not a single label to explain the whereabouts of the objects. It would be likened to the Mona Lisa being removed from its wall and no label or signage to explain its whereabouts.

Worse, still, there was no attempt to wipe clean the dusty imprints where the objects once lay. This is sloppy work and totally unacceptable. As expected, when I was there, visitors upon seeing the empty cases remarked out loud that a robbery must have occurred. For all these years, the National Museum has gained a reputation for rare security procedures and receiving in the process, many enviable art donations. Any omission can ill afford such negligence and its potential consequences.

For the record, these objects are owned by the Filipino people and they deserve being told what happened to them.

The removed artifacts became part of an exhibition titled National Cultural Treasures of Philippine Archaeology on the third floor of the National Gallery of Art. They were encased, each bearing explanatory labels containing incorrect grammar and errors, grade school-level bullet points, and yawn-inducing scientific verbiage.

The huge introductory wall text is a sophomoric exercise in defining terms ("What is Nationalism?") and has a tone of defensiveness in their artifact selection.

Most important, for an important exhibit of Philippine treasures and as a way to instill national pride in our language, all the text should have been in Filipino with accompanying English translation, not solely in the English language that it is at present. The omission of our language for a Philippine exhibition in the National Museum is unconscionable and boasting of patriotic sensibilities.

'Spoliarium' disturbed

The most egregious discovery is what Mr. Barns did with the "Spoliarium," if not the country's most important painting, the "Sistine Luna."

For over 30 years since it was gifted by Spain, the huge painting, which had been a gold medal in Europe in the 19th century, stood mounted in one viewing plane.

About three years ago, the painting was moved to the rear wall to protect it from earthquakes and to widen the viewing space, so that another large donated painting, the "Assassination of Governor Bustamante" by Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo, could be achieved as well. The preparations for this move were done with extreme care.

NEXT STORY

Jeremy Barns replies

The Senate Hall will be totally restored to the fullness of its original architectural grandeur

WE WELCOME all comments, feedback and suggestions on how we can improve our services to the public and other stakeholders...and especially on how we can better promote the appreciation and understanding of our country's cultural and natural heritage.

But I think feedback should be well-intentioned and public-spirited.

I mention this because we believe that Ms. Silva is pursuing a bitter personal agenda. He has been the recipient of a demand letter by the museum for amounts owed to us through his well-known team-his response yet).

Furthermore, the records of the museum do not reveal any appointment, contract, designation or other instrument that ever entitled him to represent himself as any type of consultant to the National Museum.

I would clearly wish he explain to all of us why he felt entitled to represent himself as Senior Curator of the "National Museum" for something like a decade. At best, he was merely in the employ of Mr. Antonio Cojuangco, who served as chair from 1998-March 2010, during which time Silva never seemed to have possessed any formal affiliation with the museum.

No less than the Commission on Audit (COA) has brought these matters to my attention, pointing out in its 2008 report (the 2009 report is yet to be released) that "The museum allowed without a covering Contract the conduct of a private activity entitled 'Tour with John Silva' which charged museum fees without legal basis, and for which the museum failed to realize income amounting to P66,750..."

If I may quote from the report: "Furthermore, deemed free admission fees charged to each individual entering the museum were collected by Mr. Silva and not by the cashier. Based on the logbook maintained by the security guard, it was noted that for CY 2008, there were 615 attendees of the tour with John Silva in the museum, hence income totaling at least P66,750 was not collected and recorded in the books."

The interest is based on the P150 entrance fee (x 445 = 66,750), which was the standard entrance fee of the museum at the time, and that Mr. Silva, ostensibly on behalf of the museum as a consultant, charged P750 for adults.

COA noted that "the National Museum allowed the conduct of the private activity 'Tour with John Silva,' without any clear basis on the grant of such exclusive privilege" and it is perhaps because I refuse to extend such privilege to anyone without recourse that the museum's interests are adequately safeguarded—in line with pertinent laws, rules and regulations and in full support of the Commission of Audit—that motivates the article by Mr. Silva.

Well-received exhibit

About the "sloppy" and "sophomoric" exhibition, National Cultural Treasures of Philippine Archaeology, everyone is entitled to formulate their own. But the exhibit was the work of its honest researchers and I am proud to stand by it. We have received a multitude of positive comments since the June 14 opening, in part because all the artifacts on display are the original—not replicas and many

JEREMY S.J.

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CASE once holding the Manunggul jar is empty and with no explanatory label as to where it is.

THE SIDE of the "Spoliarium" after having been moved. Drilling occurs and all paintings get dusted. Guards still allowed to enter.

EMPTY case once housing Capt. Juvenile Mercier's gold and 900-plus-piece ajar when it was.

Why did they . . .

From page C1

In his brief and truncated tenure of four months, Mr. Barns decided to again move the "Spoliarium" 20 ft forward. The reasons remain unclear to senior museum staff.

Moving a 127-year-old painting that required National Fern Jose Ryal and embroidered the Bonifacios in Spain cannot just be done without good reason. The painting is actually three portions sewn and painted over. The canvas age is now stressed and fragile. The century-old paint has been subjected to pollution and time: they easecracure on cause flaking, warping and even ripping, as this move, absolutely unnecessary, evidenced a national treasure.

Had Mr. Barns consulted with his predecessor, Corazon Alvina, she would have advised against it.

On the day of my visit there were several workmen drilling and hammering away in the same gallery in the same way for the "Spoliarium." The dust they created was seen on the cupboard the room—with the painting temporarily uncovered. In barong there were to the more-worn Luna paintings including the remarkable "Bulaklak" plus Luna's landmark masterpiece, On the opposite side was the Hidalgo "Assassination" painting, totally exposed to the work dust.

Basic museological practice would be to empty the whole room of its contents so that the grimy work can be done. If it cannot be emptied, at least the paintings and artifacts should have been covered.

The carelessness of such negligence can be deleterious to the monument, for example, the gaping-jaw dome of the Hidalgo painting would, and with good reason, withdraw her donation.

There were flimsy modifications all over which, if they accidentally fell, could damage the paintings and artifacts. Real even more reprehensible was that the gallery was still open to the public, endangering anyone walking in.

Senate Hall emptied

The Bonifacio itself and chair. I entered the Senate Hall on the fourth floor and found the doors wide open, during our tenure, the doors were always locked and one needed several permissions before entering. I was again at what I saw.

I entered a barren hall, emptied of rose of period desks and three chairs each having been used by the country's most eminent and highly respected senators and their aides. I remembered a sense of gravity when I first walked into this hall years back. We had loved every which way then to think of what to do with the hall, perhaps small concerts, theatrical productions and the like.

We were stymied by Section 5 of the Museum Law (republic Act 9072) which specifically states that the Senate Hall be "...preserved as a tribute" to our "distinguished senators" and "... a relic in their deliberatory and hearings original." The words "preserve" and "relic" is unequivocal, meaning that it should be exactly as it was when the Senate left it.

Now, the reason, too, is debatable. In the very same wings where these Senators blasted Reina and Proclaimed Marcos restored Democracy for the presidency, where Gary M. Reyes launched fiery speeches, where Jose Diokno and Benigno Aquino eloquently spoke for human rights and denounced corruption. The list of brilliant and controversial senators that occupied that stage and sat on those customized chairs is lengthy.

The law was very wise and very clear in the pursuit of honoring and remembering. Now, absent with appurtenances, the spirit of these senators in this hall has been extinguished. The previous administration zoned for repurposing People Power history by tinkering with the dates. Mrs. Arroyo's museum director has seemingly taken the cue from her by putting the Senate Hall and erecting an additional 70 years of Upper Senate Architectural history and the rooms therein.

We might paint over the rubble in the Senate Hall and ponder 90s. Arroyo's proxy failure in the 2nd election, her choice of disastrous Senate candidates, her years of unconstitutional institution, and vindication.

It would have made more sense for those appointees, after President Aquino's victory, to have toasted along as ceremonial farmers and, with defendant, graciously retired, whatever goods are irreplaceable. These are personal heritage structures with vulnerable one-of-a-kind objects each proclaiming our national identity and deserving of our protection. The stewards to the National Museum must be equal to the trust.

John A. Allen is former senior consultant to the National Museum.

PHILIPPINE exhibits have always been in Filipino, with English translation. This time it is English only.

DISPLAY corner of rare Ming blue-and-white dish with flying elephant design, now empty, with only dirt imprint.

Jeremy Barns replies

From page C1

barns not been seen by the public for a long time or even at all.

As to labels explaining where removed objects are now formed, this is hardly the fault of the board ("former board") is completely inaccurate as of Aug. 211, but may have been an oversight of the museum personnel.

The allegation such as if the museum trustees themselves removed the objects from their cases and expressly directed that no labels be placed there remains: *Anyhow*, the lack of labels, if true, will be corrected in due course, and if any inconvenience was caused anyone, I will be the first to apologize.

The whole point of the exhibit is to introduce the public to the concept of an Archaeological National Collection. The artifacts in the cases were the result of a collaboration between the museum's Archaeology Division, Museum Education Division, and most of all, the Cultural Properties Division.

Nothing I read was seriously incorrect. The exhibit is a fantastic and unprecedented display of some of the greatest relics of our cultural heritage. The comments are simply malicious.

Why 'Spoliarium' was moved

It was certainly my idea to move the "Spoliarium" four meters forward. The aim is restore the used doorways of the hall, which were almost two meters behind the painting—a space not meant for them to be resolved.

Studying the doorways and removing the eastern end of the hall is crucial to 2) Preserving appreciation of the heritage of the hall itself, which between 1921 and Martial Law served as the session hall of the House of Representatives; and 2) Enhancing the visitor experience through the second floor by reviving the hall as the central axis of the building.

I had consulted with the museum's chief conservators as to the feasibility of the move, and they confirmed that the painting was located was too proximate to the fire-suppression system which, in the event of a leak through the pipes, could have disastrous consequences on the painting.

As for the movement itself, there would be no problems as long as it was done properly. The result, which everyone is free to see, is very satisfactory.

The reasons for the movement were because the stars close to all our staff (Christie thanks). Also, where the painting is now (which is near where it originally used to be in the first place before the wars derailed by Mr. Silva) allows for much more wall space behind where the significance and history of the painting can be articulated for the benefit of all visitors (as per visit there is no room for any information of this kind). At the same time, the beautiful ground and doorways are now exposed and ready for the restoration.

The painting, whose significance everyone fully appreciates, was never in danger of any harm when moved.

What dust!

About the dust from the renovation impacting the paintings, this is completely false. I was there myself that day and saw no such thing. How could there be dust when the workmen were only assembling the metal working by bolting it together? Again, the entire process was managed by the museum's conservators, who themselves have medical and are coordinating the "Bonifacio" and the "Pagpatay ni Gobernadorcillo Ibalatanzas" of Hidalgo.

Section 5 of R.A.8491 states that "The National Museum shall preserve the Senate Session Hall as a tribute to the legacy of the great men and women of the Philippine Senate for their invaluable contributions to the Filipino people, and as a relic where democracy and freedom reigned and owners of national significance transpired."

The term of the old Senate Session Hall in April 2018 was very sad. It had never been opened to the public since the Senate moved out in 1996 and the National Museum occupied the entire building in 1998.

The reasons was simple. There were serious concerns as to the structural stability of the wooden floor, and in general it was not in a presentable state due to deterioration brought about by leaks in the ceiling, crumbling asbestos tiles, defunct electricals and overaloaded air-conditioning, and termites running through many of the plywood partitions. Again, I repeat that the public has never been allowed in the Senate Hall through the auspices of the National Historical, as I really do not know where Mr. Silva is coming from.

Senate Hall

It was decided by this board on my recommendation that all interventions be carefully discussed so allow for the repair and restoration of the underlying and surrounding original elements. There were at least 50 years of interventions that concealed, modified or destroyed the original dimensions and features of the hall as designed by Juan Arellano and decorated by Isabelo Tampinco. Examples are the mezzanine galleries, a whole bank of 38 windows that were blocked up, and the ceiling for a bathroom that apparently existed at some point within the hall(!!!).

Based on assessments made possible through the dismantling, it was found that it would be possible to remove in virtually its entirety the Senate Hall as we know it today, and preserve in the public the space as it appeared through the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s before post-war interventions were made that had since deteriorated.

Again, the assessments were made by the museum's restoration and conservation experts and all work to date has proceeded in line with their recommendations.

The resulting aim of preserving a substantially greater Session Hall highlighting the period when the Philippine Senate was at its zenith, was the primary reason for the protection of Philippine Independence from the United States, was formulated based on my own research and experience (including years of management of the restoration of historic rooms in Malacañang Palace from the ruins period and the wounds and re-authoring of the official ceremonial history of the House of Representatives...which when our legislators were ensconced before and during the war held to the same as this hall).

I reminded the National Historical Institute (whose chair is regularly invited to the board meetings as an observer and stakeholder) and received its endorsement of the idea, apart from the historical significance that the museum will be able to promote to the public, the Senate Hall will be totally restored to the fullness of its original architectural grandeur. We hope to open the hall to the public—for the very first time—on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the inauguration of the Philippine Commonwealth on Nov 15. The hall will not be fully restored, but the public will at last be able to enter and appreciate the impressive space even as the museum implements the restorations in phases.

The stage was already heavily modified/altered well before 2018, and there no record/data as to the pre-Martial Law features. Senators do not occupy the narrow to make speeches. That is just logistics. In any case, we certainly aim to promote the full appreciation of the interrelated heritage of the Senate as well as the individual legacies of the great Senators.

"Unwanted chairs? Now doesn't with appointments?" When the Senate moved out in 1996 they took all the furniture with them. Desks, chairs and all. I've asked about them, but the old furniture seems to have all been disposed of. Again Bonifacio, the statement is totally false.

New board qualified

About our appointments: as of legal payment for political from this is nonsense. What favor can there be? The timeless series with the museum, and I enjoy my position. At the same time, they have to work hard to provide the government and oversight that is mandated in the Museum Law.

"Experimental status for nonsense"—what does this refer to? If this is to mean that I, who have been years in charge of the history and heritage of the Office of the President and of the Malacañang Palace Museum with all its vast collections (which at my initiative can now be accessioned to a special collection of the National Museum), am the discharging the duty I served seriously as Acting Presidential Assistant (consultant), Director III, Director IV and Assistant Secretary. Throughout all here years I worked in full cooperation with all the cultural agencies, including the National Museum, and nevertheless well enough in the cultural and heritage sector.

A professional third-level civil servant, I held the rank of CESO III, and left in the first CESO to occupy the directorship of the National Museum, which is in fact covered by the Career Executive Service.

In short, I fulfill all the eligibility requirements of the post, and, at the same time, have relevant experience in this area as well as a good record.

With regard to the board, the trustees include a distinguished political scientist and historian; a well-known society lady involved in good causes; a responsible academic from the UST College of Fine Arts and Design; an active manager of a network of museums in the Visayas and the president of the Art Association of the Philippines, together with a chair who has served as public administrator/economist previously.

I really believe that what this BE is to current museum practice is the effort we are spearheading to make the National Museum into a well-run, efficient and strong government institution that draws first and foremost on its own personnel and resources means that people like him are appointed regardless of any "make papal." We are resolutely moving away from the culture of mediocrity that certain people seem to prefer and which festered over tributes by the museum on the coattendance of ministers—and starting research and training of younger talent with the primary motive as a state institution and not as a charity.

Moreover, we are analyzing our outputs on the work of the men and women who are actually employed to the museum, and not wasting time, effort and money in outside experts—most especially in the creation of our permanent collections, because this has led to demoralization and lack of accountability. Already, there is a strong sense of revitalization and renewed motivation in several divisions of the museum.

We in the museum have a very clear idea of how to be of greatest service to the people and we are working hard to full support of the objectives of President Aquino to provide better and more effective governance and transparency in government, foster greater democratization and empowerment with its and outside the organization, and transform the National Museum to one in be of greatest scientific, cultural and educational relevance to the Filipino people.

Jeremy Barns (ESO III)
Director IV
National Museum

THE SENATE Hall, where once thrilled and shares every, laid out and is empty as the far end for senators.

CLOSE-UP of stage area. Note outline of stage where illustrious speakers spoke.

Pilita Corrales performs her hit songs at fundraising show

IT SEEMED like a regular Saturday night at Casino Español de Cebu. Magi Achilles Bakas had just finished the anticipated Blues at the bowling alley's Lipstix nightclub, some fans were celebrating their birthdays, and people were exchanging greetings.

Invariably, all stops led to the regular buffet, with more tables at the poolside terrace taken, as well as at the air-conditioned bar area. The usual crowd also gathered at El Corazón, like Myra Gonzalez and Margot Lastrilago who were seeing in with some old friends.

The Casino's officer in charge May Gealon and Rudy Pahl exchanged knowing glances. Maybe it was because the evening session had a big opener, but they noticed the crowds were churning out more than the usual slabs of Bagoa beef.

Whatever, they know something not everyone was aware of. It was a dressy crowd but not everyone was at ease in Pershing Jada and Carmen Caballero, who then settled in to the dining room. The mystery cleared when they approached a table and asked, "Is this where we will meet Pilita?"

They meant Pilita Corrales, of course, here in Cebu for unscheduled fundraiser sequences for CMAI about her childhood haunts in Cebu. Pilita was not born here but she spent her teen years—the happiest, by many—in Cebu as a student of Colegio de la Inmaculada Concepción (CIC).

Pilita's father Don Rafael Corrales had a high post in San Miguel, and served as president of Casino Español de Cebu. The club used to have a group of thespians that presented Spanish comedies, with him as leading man, and Angelita Lhuillier as leading lady.

Its Boardroom and Gamers looked silent. History Jumps Loop appeared, and said, "Yes, yes, this is where Hilos will sit. Make your selves comfortable, enjoy the ballet, and wait a while, the filming will start soon."

Slim Pilita

But filming could not be at El Corazón which has a dress code, and the Gleh crew were shorts. So good time Pilita arrived and sat down for a bowl of vegetable soup. Hilos as a rule, but diet will not allow for more. Myra and Margot stood up to greet her, and so did Rebecca and Goring (nee Velez) Lizarme.

The ladies identified themselves as former debutantes, as students and alumnae of CIC are referred to. Marujo Banks and Edelmira Alvarez joined Pilita's table, looking radiant with their many beauties.

"I remember my school, my alma mater," Pilita told all and sundry. "From the airport this afternoon, I went straight there, to greet the nuns; one of them had been my classmate."

The nonnes were outside were being very patient, and Pilita eventually emerged for the shoot. The butterfly-sight crowd gathered at the fully lit foyer, and almost broke into applause when Pilita adopted her wide-eyed innocent when told what was the background, a line of photos of Casino Español de Cebu presidents, her father among them.

"Come to my show on Monday," she said, waving farewell. That was quite a crescendo of Cebu's culture as Casino's Salon de Espalda Fue, Sights Latex "Tampoo" in here," someone told Daniel Carpenter, the ace photographer, and Charles Lim, president of Ideal Interiors of Cebu.

Show's beneficiary

Pilita's show, titled "One to One," was presented by Ideal with chairperson Shawry Lazo involving Casino Español on its 90th anniversary. During her months of settlement, Shawry stated that the beneficiary was the feeding Programs of Hn Eminences Ricardo Cardinal Vidal, Archbishop of Cebu.

Given her cue, Pilita made her entrance from the back through the center aisle, shimmering with black sequins, and humming as she left.

How Pinoys abroad bond with their parents

THOSE OF us who live in the same country as our parents are most blessed in the sense that we can visit them on weekends, talk to them on the phone or text them.

It's much harder to stay connected when you live a continent away. To think God for e-mail, Facebook, Skype, Magic Jack and the ever dependable land line or cell phone.

Irma Cielo Miranda from with her husband Paolo and sons, Pepi and Dio in Wong Switzerland. She says that as she has grown older, her relationship with her parents has evolved.

On a recent trip to the Philippines, her father and mother-in-law got into car accident. "I was quite stressed to have to deal with these while on vacation, but I was also relieved to be there for them and feel useful after 10 months of being away. We take out on the everyday by not being in the same country as our parents, and sometimes, perhaps because of their age, all they look forward to is our physical presence for moral support. I have found that, the older I get, the easier it becomes for me to surrendered our parents' respect. Perhaps each day that we spend away from home is an affirmation for them that they have raised responsible children who are capable of living in a foreign environment."

She says Facebook and e-mail are lifesavers. "It makes 'time' updating so much easier. Our parents may not be able to upload and reply all the time, but they are always aware of what is going on in our lives."

Irma says her mom Fe sends postcards, a some strip dipping, greeting card to Paolo and Pepi.

Dr. Francis Dayot, who is based in North Carolina, calls his mom via Skype as often as he can. "Like Skype because there's the added advantage of seeing the person in real time and being able to 'fp-mail to ease the audio has problems."

Cost-efficient

Marujo Hurtado Lumantad, an elementary teacher in New York, and Antonette Gaza Pinaud, a homemaker from Philadelphia have parents who use Magic Jack, a $100 gear that one plugs into the laptop or desktop and minimizes costs of overseas calls. Marujo says if she wants to talk to her mom, she sends her an SMS and they agree on a specific time.

Somewhat Cecilia Lopez Bautista and husband Leroy keep in touch with their loved ones through phone calls and photographs. "We send photos through Multiply and Snapfish. It's not only to catch up with what's going on here, but also to instill in our children the value of family time which is a priority to our family," she declares.

Jun-Jel Tenario lives in San Francisco with wife Tet and their two children. Because his mom lives in a province where HOP services are almost non-existent, he has to choose his to give her a call. Joy Ann Cabrera-Lara, an artist/homemaker from with husband Dodi and their two boys in New Jersey.

"Skyping to touch is very big 'quality of life' issue for all of us, who live further than a few hours by car," Joy Ann says. For her, Skype is wonderful. "We 'attended' my uncle's Requiem Mass via Skype. We have "birthday parties" via Skype (we'll just roast or sing happy birthday on Skype, but we're not organized), one could invite other expat relatives, get cake and blow candles on their get!"

Whether you live a kilometer or in a different time zone, remember that life is short. Know your priorities and spend as much time with loved ones as you can.

E-mail the author at estelpbautista@gmail.com

Piolo Pascual: *Reaching for the Stars*

"Protect your dreams. It's time!"

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Harboring no illusions that his popularity and career will last forever, he continues to prepare for his future. Proper financial planning is center to his hard-earned financial freedom, especially for his own son, Mapi.

Prudent handling of his money is also critical. So Piolo continues to save for rainy days, in preparation for the challenges that he will encounter along the way.

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It's time!

She's pining for an ex-BF who's now in love with someone else

DEAR EMILY,

I broke up with my boyfriend of five years last year, and I say to tell honestly that I haven't forgotten him nor stopped loving him. We broke up because of our differences and I felt that his love for me has waned. There was no third party involved in our breakup. It was also both our first relationships.

I tried reconciling with him a couple of times already since last year, but to no avail. He said we're better off as friends and that he is seriously pursuing a new girl already. This crushed me, inwardly. He's the only guy I've ever loved. And till now, I would still prefer him over any other guy I've met after we broke up. Though I'm not bugging him anymore, I'm still hoping he will come back to me. It hurts a very painful cut to see and more than enough blessings to make me smile each day, but still, I can't forget him and no new him.

I wish I could just wake up one day and find out I don't love him anymore. It's just so unfair. How he could be take me off his mind and erase his love for me that soon, that easily? What I just want now is to forget him and let the love hole as soon as possible. I don't want to enter into a new relationship just to forget my ex. I want to be whole again for the next guy in my life. It pains me every single time knowing he already loves someone else.

CJ

Dear CJ: I need more say they'll love us forever and in a span of years or five years decide on the word love? They cannot even figure out how the L word even got in their vocabulary. You're not alone girl, so stop your limping and get a life already. Try to way your making a 12-stairs for you at this point. A man is not every respect and a sign of valiant him, no matter if you've had a history together. More especially if there's already a new girl seated in your place!

Love is a crazy and weird feeling. It sometimes be tangible and it cannot be rammed down anybody's throat. One day you're hopelessly in love and think that even a moment's separation is tantamount to dying. Then the day comes when you look at this person and ask what in heaven's name did you ever see — in him, or in your boyfriend's eyes... as you. It seems tragic, unless — you are content a litany of adjectives to describe him, and it still won't appreciate the pain of your bleeding heart.

It will be best if you don't restate this seemingly relentless ache. Allow time to work its magic. And how can you even think that you can seamlessly go through a relationship by obliterating the past. Are you that naive to believe you can appear and feel virginal again — if not literally, then figuratively perhaps? There's no such thing. You should in fact allow the lessons of the past to guide you along the thorny road to love. Yes, beneath the splendor of the seemingly true answer to manic endorsements lavish effusiveness for the real McCoy lie the flaws that make us break relationships.

Go out, have fun, forget and dance, of course. That break-up may even turn out to be a blessing. He may have been your first love, but you can carve it in stone that he will not be your last.

"The best way to get over a man is to get under the spell of another," said a wise saying. You might heed it. It did not come down from the grapevine of misery and become a palliative among the broken-hearted — for nothing.

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'Dalaw Soledad 2010' starts at the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Naic

THE CORNERS de Nuestra Señora de Soledad de Peña Vega has prepared a list of ministations of the icon of the Virgin Mary called "Dalaw Soledad 2010." It started with a visit last Aug. 20 to the Shrine and Parish of the Immaculate Conception in Naic, Cavite, with Fr. Virgilio Mendoza as parish priest.

The devotion to the Virgin Mary as Our Lady of Soledad de Peña Vega began as far back as 1692 in Cavite City when Juan de Chaves offered her to the "ermita" on April 13, 1692. The icon was found on the shore of Cañacao Bay by workers passing by. The Virgin Mary was portrayed kneeling and looking down on the instruments that hurt her son, Jesus, during the Crucifixion. The original painting is enshrined in the Church of San Roque in Cavite City.

An intense devotee of the Soledad was the late Intricate Nazarene who prepared the Tricentennial of the devotion in April 1992. The spread of the devotion is credited to him because he went out of his way to make the "Soledad" known through the four-day celebrations of the Tricentennial.

Cofradía

These days, the Cofradía de Nuestra Señora de Soledad de Peña Vega, composed of young men and women devoted to the Soledad, is bringing the icon in different churches, namely: Chapel of the Sanctuary of St. Dominic in Tagaytay City (Aug. 20-21); Parish of St. John Evangelist in Malibay, Pasay City (Aug. 28-Sept. 4); Parish of San Roque in Pateros (Sept. 4-11); Radio Veritas (Sept) on Mon. Sat., every 10:54 (Sept. 5-10); Parish of the Lord of the Divine Mercy in Sikatuna Village (Sept. 11-12); Parish of the Holy Guardian (Sept. 12-Oct. 2); Parish of Our Lady of Lourdes in Concepcion, Sorsogon (Oct. 2-9); Parish of the Immaculate Conception in Cruzeiro, Sorsogon (Oct. 9-16); Parish of San Nilas de Tondo (Oct. 16-23); and Shrine and Parish of the Immaculate Conception in Naic (Oct. 23).

Peñafrancia visitations

Catch the pilgrim image of Ina at the Edsa Shrine (Aug. 20-22). Fr. Leo Nilo Mangaoang and devotees welcomed the Virgin. Other schedules are Aug. 23-25 (9968 Main Office at Ayala Ave.); and Aug. 25-28 (UST Chapel).

'Bayan ng Palaspas'

The hymn "Bayan ng Palaspas" with lyrics by Dr. Ernani Cuenco and music by Prof. Simeon Tolentino Ramos was sung for the first time by Cuenco Treasures and accompanied by the UST Symphony Orchestra during the 6 p.m. Mass on Aug. 15, feast day of Our Lady of Birch Stocco. By the way, Jobin Almonte Lopez belongs to the Brazen council of Sr. Andrew Cathedral.

Santa Sepulcro fiesta

Poor Church, also known as Iglesia Hermanda de Dilao Parish, is known for celebrating the feast day of the miraculous image Sepulcro on the third Sunday of August (Aug. 22 this year). Cardinal Rosales will officiate in the ensemble-featured Mass at 6 p.m. Concelebrating are parish priest Msgr. Rolly de la Cruz, parochial vicars Fr. Wilfredo Talavera and Fr. Edio Almonte, and Fr. Manuel Arnaz and Fr. Luke Mongan, CICM.

Aida Abarentosa is the parish lay coordinator, while the Couples for Christ are in-charge of the fiesta. Estela Abenza, Fe, Pio Cleto, Andrea Durango and Aida Abarentosa are in-charge of Mass sponsors. This Sol Vo told me she has been a devotee of the Santa Sepulcro since she and her husband Peter Vo settled to Sto. Cristo in 1965. And she credits to the great help the Lord has given her family.

Quezon birth anniversary

Quezon City Mayor Herbert Bautista led the way in marking the 132nd birth anniversary of Manuel L. Quezon, president of the Commonwealth of the Philippines. Special guest was Vice President Jejomar Binay. Present were Vice Mayor Joy Belmonte Alimurung, officers of civil organizations, Stanwood Homestead Commission executive director Gabriel Ma. J. Lopez and Ricky Avanceña who represented his mother Nini Quezon Avanceña.

'My life as a missionary'

Fr. Georges Rutsaert Bursaerspeed, SJ, who is now 97, wrote the book "My Life as a Missionary" and was recently launched by the friends of Bursaerspeed at the Ateneo's Milagar Conference Room. Betty Bonte-Chua and her family had it published as a way of thanking the good priest for teaching three Catechists when they were children. More important of all was the fact that Fr. Georges was instrumental in getting Betty and her sister into Immaculate Conception Academy and her brothers into Xavier School.

Fr. Georges finds the Mary the Queen Parish in Cavarrubias.

For inquiries, please contact 0917.8928179 or e-mail betty@simple.com.ph.

Our Lady of Kaipunan Parish

The Parish and Shrine of Our Lady of Kaipunan will be canonically erected on Aug. 28, 9:30 a.m. in Barangay Pulong, Nabua, Camarines Sur. Archbishop Leonardo Legaspi, OP will install Fr. Vincent Sto. Domingo as first parish priest.

The people of Nabua credit Mary whom they call Nuestra Señora de Kaipunan for saving their town from destruction from earthquakes and volcanic eruptions in the 16th century. Their celebration of her feast day on May 4 and July 28 or the Sunday nearest to that day is their way of showing their gratitude. Now, they are building her a church. Please help by texting 0905-4482642 or e-mail *prosebell_2@yahoo.com*.

The religious organizations of Imelda Church will celebrate the birthday of Tony Adriano (incumbent of Nitra, Santo's de Casa) on Aug. 23 with a special Mass at 7:30 a.m. by Fr. Sonny de Claro.

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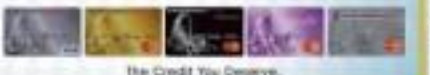

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Will you run for a smile?

TOBY At Starbucks Global City (Bonifacio Commercial Foundation Philippines, Inc. (BCFPI) and Taiwan Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) present Miles for Smiles. "It's riding the morning race event but it's a good way to reach a large audience and share the news that comprehensive cleft care is available here and more," says BCFPI president and first architect Gloria de Villa.

Events are 2k, 5k, 10k and 15k for the Men's and Women's Open and 400-meter dash for kids ages 10 and below.

Those who want to sponsor complete breakfast of a cleft child can join the "10 for a Smile" group category with 10 participants for either the 10k or 15k (10 kilos) events.

Docu film on Christianity

JESUS III Alive Community Church will be screening the movie, "1,948: Christianity in the New Asia" on Aug. 25, a documentary about the missionary movement in Asia specifically in China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Indonesia, and Singapore. The movie exhibits Asia's transition from a missionary field to a missionary-sending continent. The missionary movement happening in these countries has touched famous and average individuals to preach the gospel and share their faith with the people in their specific fields.

Jaeson Ma, one of the key personalities and narrator in the movie, will arrive in the Philippines to share his faith during the event. Jaeson Ma is a Chinese-American who lived most of his youth as a gang member having numerous arrests for crimes he was involved in. Now he is a pastor ministering to young schools in Los Angeles. He is also a businessman and a motivator. The movie screening will be at the Jesus Is Alive Community Center 37 E. Tuazon corner No. Tomas St., Brgy. Don Manuel Quezon City. Check out www.1948movie.com and www.jesusisalive.com for more information.

Workshop on English and writing

EMMA BOOK Incorporated's exciting workshop that will run for six Saturdays starting Sept. 4. Participants may choose from two classes, 9 a.m. - 12 noon or 1-4 p.m. Coverage of the workshop includes a review of grammar and word usage, exercises in style, introduction to business letter writing, feature writing, and report writing. Limited slots are available. The venue will be at Town Book House office at Windsor Tower, 1473 Legaspi St, Legaspi Village, Makati. This workshop is open to adults and professionals. Fees are P2,200 each. Call 819-6870, 819-4868 or e-mail *mbbookstore@yahoo.com*.

Sunday LIFESTYLE

Piolo and I can train together for Ironman 2011

IRONMAN RELAY runners Sea Princess and Piolo Pascual

TESSA!
Tessa Prieto-Valdes

TOUCH 1 PARK up in sizzling Cam Sur where the scene is all too familiar. Exactly a year ago, I completed the first Cobra Energy Desk Ironman 70.3 Philippines, my most challenging endurance race ever.

A triathlon is a unique competition. There are so many competitors and only three will end up with medals. The rest are competing against themselves, mind over matter. Fortitude versus fatigue.

There in a while there are no prizes. At last year's Awards Dinner, I wound up winning third place in my age group. Sometimes it is all a function of how many are competing in the same group.

But this year is also so different. That done and, my diary or cell schedule and fun trips abroad have replaced my training routines with super Ironwoman Ani de Leon. I was unable to fully prepare for Cam Sur this year.

So instead, I decided to form a relay team, Tessa Team Valdes, with hubby Dennis starting us off by swimming the 1.9K course, then passing on his Timex Clip to brother Bubsi who will incidentally zip through the 90K bike, and then finally, to me for the 21K run, which I will do as gloriously as possible in my new and many adidas footwear running shoes.

Last year, I recall that my transition between each leg would last around 10 minutes. This time around, transitions should be measured in seconds. I am looking forward to just hanging out with the other relay runners while waiting for our bikers to arrive, especially since Interclerk exponent Pride Pascual is one of the relay runners.

Piolo is fast! "Solo Piolo" is the time to aspire for in a 10K run. We first got into running at last year's Timex Run, and participating in the Ironman triathlon quickly became part of his plans after that. After all, triathlons are more challenging and involved.

PIOLO, SEE

VICKI Belo, Hayden Kho carrying Ariana Valdes, Sea Princess and Jojo Ding Cong

CATS' Griselda Lee Salonga between Alex and Hazel Prince and Rob Chan

BIKRAM instructor Joyce Mukhalet and Cara performers Sophie Shanks, Emma Clark and Zoe Kennedy

Piolo and I can train together for Ironman 2011

Pumunta sa P4

MIAO of Wyc Sharon Cuneta between Dennis Valdes and Maurice Arcuino

TFC's Dennis and Michael Sicam Buencamino Lumbera and Fernando Josef

MANILA Pen CM Jonathan and Bella Bullet Crook at Cam

RUNNING buddies Leona Carmona and Liz Dimitriu

NIKMAS love Sea Princess and Ara Cubcub

ADIDAS Fluid Trainer Launch at Rockwell with Ara Cubcub, Kaycee Sparga Cole and the Adidas team

Ang Pambansang Pahayagan

Oakley Radar shades

But for this year, I am quite happy with a darker palette from this biggest fashion in which lets me use with my new Oakley Radar shades. There are various interchangeable lenses so the runner can have perfect vision in any environment.

Oakley's revolutionary hydrophobic lens coating repels water, skin oils and debris, keeping the optics crystal clear. The frame architecture creates a cooling flow of air, and the design features an interchangeable nosepiece for a custom fit. The result is a new milestone in performance technology.

My race will start most likely going through the mountain area, so I really need my Oakley's aerodynamic design that has angular's channeling a cool flow of air, an essential for the heat of Cam Sur. Additionally, the shades have unbeatable clarity and are even protected with Plutonite lenses that filters out all UV rays.

Fluid Trainer

With all these running activities, it seems even my social events are sports oriented. Adidas presented a new era of training with its latest media purpose training shoes, the Fluid Trainer in the launch, I experienced the shoes' extreme flexibility and freedom of movement.

The launch was a simultaneous event in three Adidas stores, Rockwell, Greenbelt and Trinoma, and the fluid trainers are available. Packed by the Megaphone House led by RX 93.1's Francesca Tobias and Gino Quillamor, the Adidas store in Rockwell started the launch with performances from AzonCrash.

Keith Cruz, Adidas' Go-to lifestyle manager, explained what the super-lightweight, multi-functional footwear concept is all about. Also there were adidas endorsers Ara Cubcub and Spongecola.

Parkour demo

Meanwhile, at the Greenbelt launch, Mark Bautista's Flight One and Lia Cruz of Basketball TV demonstrated jawdrop, which was performed by three group Dreamjacks and runners from the Philippine Parkour and Freerunning Association. John Lloyd Cruz provided the glitter at GB.

The trifecta of launches was completed at Trinoma, where by Edu Tipan and Brel Felix, the launch started with an opening number from Rapper Gray and a demonstration of Body Jam from Golf Vence of 95 WILD.

I guess that's the way to go: Fluid Trainers off to a head start! Visit the adidas Rockwell launch, I also tried the new line of Stella McCartney. This is the first I'll be parading in Cam Sur.

Pelecan

Speaking of athletic events, the latest one-rewarding phenomenon in our city is pole dancing. Pelecan instructor Myla Tan said her "fitness" showed off their pole moves at the duo. models at Bikram yoga studio Carol Chappell and at a party I threw for the cast of "Cats."

The classes were so thrilled with the Pelecan that several asked to do the dancing pole studio on their own. I joined off the Pelecan with the Bev dancers from Planet Spa and five managers from Urban Spa, so the evening ranged from thrill to chill. Check out www.facebook.com/pelecanmania for more details.

BIKRAM Yoga Manila farewell party for Carol Chappell

CATS friends Nikka Diamonnahmi, Amanna and Joani Epperson, Heidi Salvador, Vanessa Fernando and Judit Morin

BEST Lola Griselda Navarro, Sea Princess and Gloria Reola

HELLO Kitty friends Malu Gamboa, Laura Carpo, Maurina Arrastia, Liz Dimitriu (sitting) Amanda Carpo, Joey Carpo and Leona Carmona

ENJOYING Cats Annika and Adriana Valdes with a pitcher Cat at intermission

POLECATS instructor Myla Tan and Mell Subog

ADIDAS Fluid Trainer Launch at Rockwell with Ara Cubcub, Kaycee Sparga Cole and the Adidas team

dancing. Pelecan instructor Myla Tan said her "fitness" showed off their pole moves at the duo. models at Bikram yoga studio Carol Chappell and at a party I threw for the cast of "Cats."

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Top Cat Lea Salonga brought her husband, Rob Chan. He and the other husbands enjoyed the pole spectacle. Lea, Joey and Jeffrey from Cat's Catering for that full Pinoy feeling. Tomorrow is the last day of "Cats," so don't try to catch it.

All the Cats are staying at the Quest Hotel, which has been having a Thai revival all month. Recently, renowned host and society columnist Johnny Litton celebrated his birthday at the ballroom. Iconic Thai DJ Pen took Bistro studs run the Thai theme was implemented down to the last details, and the food and drink were spectacular to boons of Johnny.

Among the guests was Cosmic Skew of Advance Paper, who made a generous donation of school supplies that evening to Brother Scanners KIDS foundation and to White Cross. An excellent auctioneer, Johnny led an auction to raise more for several charities.

What an excellent way to celebrate a milestone. This Johnny is truly an Iconoclastic charity if and the author at cmpritcard@inquirer.com.ph

JOURNEY Limos, Cheryl Tio, Tourism Authority of Thailand's Dara Da Jones and madam Pornsip Nakamjan, Texas Prisco-Valdez, Pepper Teehankee, Thai Airways general manager Mikel Chowtanachoti and Glenn Llamas

ADVANCE Paper Corporation vice president and sales manager Rachel Ann Cuna, cuna president and chief operating officer Connie Yap and R.O.S. Foundation's Brother Oscarpo

ROMBLE Delgado, Ambassador Isabel Wilson, Gov. Ruby Ortiz, retired Justice Art Panganiban and wife Lani

BONANZA Regency sales and marketing director Isabel Garcia and Boracay Regency chairman Henry Cheung

CHINATRUST vice chairman Bill Go, Maggie Gordon-Ji, 2011 launcher Washington Sycip and Melody Davidson

GAMBIA Consul and 2009 Philippine Dancer Society's Best Dressed awardee Agnes Hulbonitos, Fe Rodriguez, Monaco Consul Fortuna Ludovina and Tiberius Carousel Santos

PHILIPPINE Dancer Society's Best Dressed Ambassador for Life Joel Cruz, Austria and husband Sen. Miguel Zubiri

HELEN and Elizabeth Lee, Texas Prisco Valdez

Green Initiatives from the SM SUPERMALLS

SAVING THE EARTH THROUGH MUSIC AND SM's ECO BAG

CARES
LET'S DO OUR SHARE

With its hip design, functional shape, and cool message, the new SM Supermalls Eco Bag has been creating a lot of excitement among young people. That includes some of the country's top band members – **Chris Padilla of Hilera, Kean Cipriano of Callalily, Yael Yuzon of Sponge Cola, and Sib Sibulo of Day One Movement** – who not only rock because of their music, but also because of their commitment to help save the earth.

Here, they share with us their views on how they can create environmental awareness through their songs, and by joining in SM's Eco Bag movement.

CHRIS PADILLA: DO YOUR PART

Chris Padilla is the lead vocalist and guitarist of the rebels, which won the **Inquirer Soundcloud Battle of the Bands** in 2005. Hilera released its first album in 2006 and won the **Best New Artist Award** at the 2009 MO 101 Awards. Their second album, Multi-hued, was released in 2009.

If you were to sing a song for the environment, what would it be?
"The Lion Sleeps Tonight"

What is your favorite eco song?
"Earth Song by Michael Jackson"

If you were to write a song for the earth what would it be about?
"It would be about those who make live lives about the environment. They are responsible and can make a difference, so I would like to reach out to them."

How can you help save the earth?
"On your part – do what is right, don't do what is wrong. There is a saying that if you are doing something right, then you're okay, if it's something wrong, then there's an acknowledgment."

Why use an Eco Bag?
"It's definitely more helpful to Mother Earth than a plastic bag."

Your message for our youth?
"Don't throw your litter just anywhere, and learn to segregate your waste properly. Try to be conscientious."

Chris of Hilera goes with the flow while shopping at S-cat at the Mega Atrium

KEAN CIPRIANO: LOVING OUR EARTH

Kean Cipriano is the vocalist of Callalily, which has just released the single Ligaya, a song about first love that remains unwavering, from their self-titled third album. Aside from working with his band, Kean also stars in TV5's BFGF every Sunday at 4:30 PM, as well as 105 at noontime on the same day.

If you were to sing a song about the environment, what would it be?
"The Captain Planet Theme Song. It doesn't directly say that Captain Planet is the hero, it's just a way of making us aware that we should take care of the earth."

What is your favorite eco song?
"The coconut is a giant nut."

If you were to write a song for the earth, what would it be about?
"It will be about planting trees with a slightly bouncy but ambient rhythm, and a rather preachy tone to create that consciousness. The message would be similar to Michael Jackson's Man in the Mirror – before you do anything, take a look at yourself first."

How can you help save the earth?
"First of all, I would pray for the earth, that I believe that I cannot help save the earth alone, that is why I will join events for the environment."

Why use an Eco Bag?
"It's like bringing a tumbler water rather instead of drinking from a bottle of mineral water. Using an Eco Bag minimizes the use of plastic bags."

Your Message for the Youth?
"It's public. We only have one earth, one country ... that's why we should love it and do anything to save it."

Callalily vocalist Kean likes the energy of the SM Supermall's Spark eco bag as he shops at Supre at the 4th Floor of the Mega Atrium.

YAEL YUZON: PLANETEER POWER

Yumari Yoshioka Yuzon, better known as Yael, is an English Lit graduate of the Ateneo de Manila University and the vocalist of the popular Sponge Cola band. Yael wrote the band's current single, Makipaling Ay when he was in high school. A song about longing for loved ones, it was inspired by his parents' seemingly long distance relationship – no more being a flight stewardess.

If you were to sing a song for the environment what would it be?
"It would be the theme song of Captain Planet. It's very environmental, and is something from my childhood that's so much part of me."

What is your favorite eco song?
"Young Upper"

If you were to write a song about the environment, what would it be about?
"I would write about battlements and mixed breed dogs ... it asked on animal homes rights is a concern, and people should also value aspins the same way they value pure bred dogs."

How can you help save the earth?
"By doing little things like cutting down on my electricity."

Why use an Eco Bag?
"I actually keep eco bags in several colors in the car so that I don't have to get plastic bags when I do my groceries. That's because I don't want to harm dolphins or turtles who might suffocate when they eat plastic bags. That are thrown to the sea."

Message to the youth?
"We are planeteers, and you can be one too. Your decisions matter, and the power is yours. Always be aware of how your actions can affect the environment."

The Renew Eco Bag rocks with Yael as he goes shopping at the Mega Atrium

SIB SUBULO: LITTLE THINGS THAT MAKE AN ECO DIFFERENCE

Jonathan Sales Sibulo or Sib, in short, known for the Filipino indie rock band Day One Movement, is an MTV Video Jock and a DJ of UB2. A Philosophy grad of the Ateneo de Manila University, he also hosts Chalkboy Zalamero on 93.5 FM.

What is your favorite eco song?
"Joey Ayala's Ayala Hanay Awit. When I was in college, I as part of a dance group that was asked to dance to the music of Ayala, and we really memorized the song."

If you were to write a song about the environment, what would it be about?
"It would be about animals, especially endangered species. When I watch documentaries on Discovery or National Geographic channels, I feel bad when I see animals, especially dogs, maltreated. I'm an animal lover and I have a pet dog."

How can you help save the earth?
"I think that simple things can collectively contribute to larger efforts to save the planet. Simple efforts like not littering, checking your car for emissions, buying products that are biodegradable. Sometimes you think that these are small acts, but in the end these can make a big difference."

Why use an Eco Bag?
"It's again one of the simple things that can make a lot. It's our contribution to saving the environment."

Embrace a green lifestyle with SM's Breath eco friendly bag at Fred Perry at the Third Floor of the Mega Atrium.

Message for the youth?
"It's these small things we do that we think won't make an impact that on the long run make a big difference. If we want to make it to tomorrow, it's the choices we make today that matters."

GOING GREEN WITH SECRET RECIPE

Secret Recipe as a lifestyle suits that suits your taste, your lifestyle, and your budget. It has 10 new items in its menu, making sure that every new discovery is a new secret each time they dine – like just how healthy and eco-friendly their food is.

From veggie win Thai Green Curry Chicken and Mozzarella Salad Trio to refreshingly healthy Green Apple Kasturi to fresh fruits blended with healthy yoghurt, eating healthy and top never been so delicious.

Secret Recipe is located at the Second Floor of the Mega Atrium, or visit their website at www.secretrecipe.ph or

THAI GREEN CURRY CHICKEN
Expansive ingredients of Thailand with this exotic mix and fragrant green curry cooked with pea, beans, eggplants. Served with rice, chopsticks and forks.

ORANGE & STRAWBERRIES 'N CREAM
Citrus tangy and sweet strawberry, your favorite fruits blended with healthy yogurt. Tasty Dream's so healthier way to start your day!

MOZZARELLA SALAD TRIO
Enjoy this salad luxury in cubes of baked zucchini filet covered with rich, scrumptious mozzarella cheese garnished with cherry tomatoes. Tabe-sabusan according to Dream with drizzled aged balsamic and green dressed extra cubes.

GREEN APPLE KASTURI
Refresh yourself in a healthy way with this hot Tempe's favorite drink uniquely smooth and cool like Green Apple Kasturi added with fresh yoghurt with a sweet and salty twist.

FAMILY SHOPPING FUN AT THE NEW SM PAMPANGA

Kabalens and out-of-town visitors who frequent SM City Pampanga have been amazed at the transformation of the newly renovated SM Department Store.

Combining great design and great retail, the 18,000 square-meter store brings an exciting new shopping experience to Pampanga with its contemporary design, vibrant colors, and great style.

The change is evident at the store entrances that greet shoppers with the new diamond-type SM signage, leading them to a more sophisticated and upscale store. And more than ever, it has become a one-stop shopping destination for Kapampangan families as young couple **Jericho** and **Isabel Aguas** and son **Hubert** recently discovered when they made a visit to the store.

Angeles City Councilor Jericho Aguas climbed out the home improvement demo at ACE Express, while his wife television personality and singer **Isabel Granada-Aguas** had a great time shopping for their home at the Home Department and its accessories and souvenirs at Kultura Filipina.

The couple, who are regular SM Pampanga shoppers, had fun-filled time amazing toys for **Hubert** at Toy Kingdom Express, bio stuff at the Character Shop as well as for his clothes at the Children's Wear Department. With their busy schedules, they were delighted to know how these innovations in store design and exciting merchandise mix go hand-in-hand with new ways to serve customers.

The sprawling one-level store elevates from the traditional SM formula of two storeys, along certain levels. The notable size and height of the store called for a series of suspended colorful cubes, where each cube is designed with colorful wallpaper designs. The layout of these cubes, which makes good use of the store's depth, maximizes the shoppers' orientation and views, making it easier for them to find their way around the store.

Elegantly endorsed build up signages per department make easy navigation possible, as customers are drawn to the target categories, each with distinct wallpaper designs. Wallpapered dividers are also used as a backdrop for merchandise display to break the monotony of the one-level store.

Customers are guided around the store by playful geometric patterns and bold monumental graphics. There are geon-geometric patterns at the Home Department, and pink stripes point at the Ladies' area. The Children's Department have fun geometric

The new facade of SM Department Store Pampanga gives the store a more sophisticated look leading the shoppers to the store's more upscale interiors and great mix of merchandise.

It's always a great shopping experience at SM Pampanga Department Store for Councilor of Angeles City Jericho Aguas, wife Isabel Granada and son Hubert.

points to vibrant colors, while the Home areas are highlighted by blue and orange geometric patterns. These departmental wallpaper themes are carried on to the store's moving escalators, which make easy payment possible for shoppers.

Food Design, the team behind the new look of the store, used LED lights to outline the mood creating a welcoming ambiance to shoppers. Creatively lighting the store is an integral part of the design process. Getting up and finding the right light helps accentuate the merchandise, creating a layout with greater impact. A focused amount of light highlights each particular section in the store creating great contrast with dramatic flair.

SM Pampanga offers services that go beyond the shopping like Bills Payment, Currency Exchange, and SSS / Bond. Prestige Card members, on the other hand, can relax while enjoying special services at the Prestige Lounge. These include Concierge Services for store information and membership concerns, valet shopping, bills payment assistance, gift wrapping, and free WiFi access. They can also relax in the lounge with complimentary drinks, and a quick massage.

Like Councilor Jericho, Isabel, and Hubert Aguas, you can discover a whole new shopping experience at this newly renovated SM Pampanga Department Store!

Isabel finds it so convenient to settle her bills at the Bills Payment Services of the store.

For Hubert, a day in SM will not be complete without visiting the Toy Kingdom Express with dad Jericho and mom Isabel.

Playful wallpapered dividers in the Children's Wear Department are used as backdrop for merchandise display to break the monotony of the one-level store.

The Character Shop Department is a haven for kid's stuff.

The Aguas' check out the Home-world Section of the store.

One of Isabel's favorite stops at the store is the Kultura Filipina Department with its unique and exquisite collection of home accessories.

Jericho, Isabel and son Hubert relaxes at SM Pampanga Department Store Prestige Lounge.

Jericho checks out the DIY section at Ace Express, a one-stop shop for the latest solutions for home improvement.

WHAT'S IN STORE: GREAT HOME WORKS AND OUR 3 DAY SALE

Kultura Filipina. The place to shop for things Filipino.

Decor from the Homeworld Department.

Sheer cooking at Homeworld.

DIY solutions at Ace Express.

Amazing Toys at Toy Kingdom Express.

Sunday LIFESTYLE

A classroom in a 19th-century 'bahay-na-bato'

MUSEUM cafe decked for the merienda time

PAINTINGS photographs of the museum and memorabilia

MUSEO De La Salle

By Sheena Aquino
Contributor

THERE'S SOMETHING good about a school with a museum on its 28-hectare campus. It makes learning well-rounded and supports not only educators, but collectors, students, artists, art historians and regular day visitors, in their various quests for pieces of the past.

Opened to the public in June 2008, the Museo De La Salle was built on the initiative of then De La Salle University president Bro. Andrew Gonzalez FSC, and administered by the De La Salle Dasmariñas Cultural Heritage Foundation.

As an educational unit of De La Salle Dasmariñas, the Museo serves as a living classroom where guests, particularly students visiting can learn and enjoy Filipino

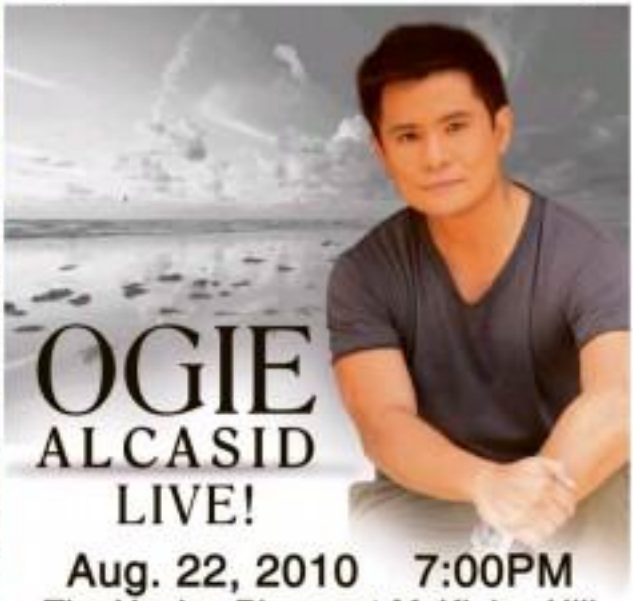
'Genesis' exhibit traces the beginning of Museo De La Salle in Cavite

talent and creativity in arts and crafts, through storytelling sessions, summer workshops, seminars and exhibitions. Envisioned to be a center of history, arts and culture in the region, the museum is part of the De La Salle Collateral Heritage complex that includes the Cavite Studies Center, Aklatan Emilio Aguinaldo and Holy Rosary Chapel.

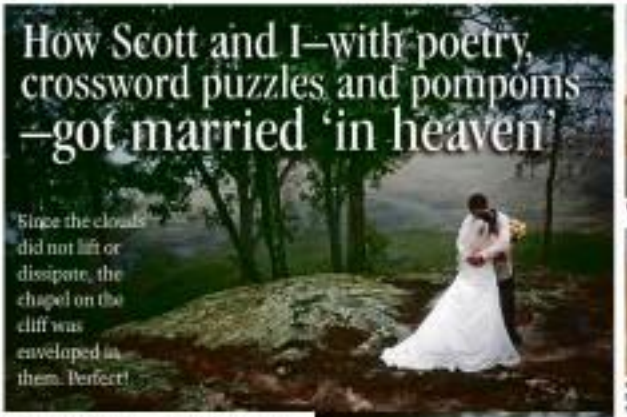
It has certainly lived up to this vision: The Cavite Studies Center has become a resource not only for Cavite Studies but all Tagalog Studies and holds regular forums with scholars and field experts all throughout the school year, providing a usable past

A CLASSROOM IN

PORTRAIT of the late Bro. Andrew Gonzalez, FSC



How Scott and I—with poetry, crossword puzzles and pompoms—got married 'in heaven'



"Since the clouds did not lift or dissipate, the chapel on the cliff was enveloped in them. Perfect!

By Dianne Bayan-Brynildsen
Lifestyle Feature

OUR WEDDING could not have been more perfect. We were married in the clouds, Methodist pioneers, feast and I prepared every little detail of our wedding. But on our special day, we were still in for a surprise!

Like most couples, we had yet more of our wedding. For Scott, it included a scenic castle atop a mountain from where one could hear the sound of rapids crashing nearby. This was far too grand for me; I wanted a simple ceremony in a peaceful meadow, not a miracle-by-mountain-stream.

We turned to the Internet and began searching for a venue we could both agree on, which is only fitting since the two of us met online nearly three years ago. After many months of searching, we found Quaint Chapel at the Cliffs in Landrum, SC. Ready for an adventure, Scott and I embarked on an eight-hour road trip from our home in Hampton, Virginia, to see if this was the perfect place to say our "I do's."

An architectural beauty this nondenominational stone chapel, which sits on a cliff overlooking the Blue Ridge Mountains, was listed with glass windows, providing an absolutely breathtaking view of the surroundings.

Upon seeing Quaint Chapel, Scott and I knew this was where we would share our vows and begin our journey as husband and wife. We chose to host a reception venue in the valley, which featured an old red mill by a gentle river, handcrafted wooden bridges and a gazebo near the water's edge.

Destination wedding

Without hesitation, Scott and I decided to organize a destination wedding 4567 miles away from our home and thousands of miles away from where many of our parents would be.

I left the Philippines at 17, where I was awarded a full scholarship to the United World College of the Adriatic in Trieste, Italy. I represented the Philippines among 200 scholars from about 85 different countries. I left homeland to bring pride to the Philippines when I was selected as the student commencement speaker.

After completing my International Baccalaureate program in Italy, I received another full scholarship to Wellesley College in Massachusetts, USA, where I completed my Bachelor of Arts Degree in International Relations and Economics.

Although I have been away from home, I have always kept the Philippines close to my heart. My international education and global experience did not dilute my Filipino values, but only strengthened them.

Paying tribute to unique Filipino customs, I included the coral, candles and veil traditions in our wedding ceremony. My family brought the veil and cord straight from Manila. Family and friends were both honored and engaged in the ceremonies.

Rather than having several pairs of ninongs and ninangs, Scott and I decided to involve all of our guests by requesting a community vow of support. Prior to our first kiss as husband and wife, we also asked our married guests to share their wisdom by reciting lines from Wilfred Peterson's "Art of Marriage."

Embracing Pinoy culture

Unlike me with my extensive travels, Scott had never been outside of the North American continent. However, he had always dreamt of exploring the world. Thus, upon getting to know me, he knew I was the one he'd share his life with.

Scott and I met while he was finishing his Masters Degree in Aerospace Engineering at Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta, and I was interning for a nonprofit organization over the summer. We became very good friends and enjoyed each other's company. We continued to nurture our friendship long after I left Atlanta, even back in the Philippines, Wellesley College and even when I studied in Geneva, Switzerland. Our strong and pure friendship grew into a solid foundation for a lifelong commitment.

Despite being American and one who had never been in the Philippines, Scott embraced Filipino culture. He endeavored to learn Tagalog and inquired about Filipino customs and values. Even in the early stages of our relationship, Scott made sure he got to know my family through online video conferencing.

DIANNE Bayan-Brynildsen and Scott Brynildsen

THE COUPLE poses outside Quaint Chapel at the Cliffs in Landrum, South Carolina.

ALFREDO Bayan, Louie Kua, Peter Gilbert, Juan Paul Manansala, Winston Ally, Scott Brynildsen, David John Rapsa, Mark Brynildsen

He understood the close-knit nature of Filipino families and honored it. Through constant communication in this day and age, Scott asked our parents for my hand in marriage and sought their blessing.

DIY ceremony

Away from family and close friends, Scott and I had to do everything by ourselves. Although a daunting task, we took it as an opportunity to piece together the most personal, personal touches throughout our wedding and gave guests a chance to get to know us as a couple.

From the ceremony script to the centerpieces, we ensured that every little detail had a purpose. Scott and I wrote our own ceremony script, which reflected not only our thoughts but also our personalities. Our wedding vows were no unique that guests laughed and cried, all at the same time.

Our wedding was filled not only with love, but also poetry in lieu of love letters. Scott and I wrote letters to each other for the time we got reunited, we had collected over a thousand haikus. It was only fitting to incorporate them in the wedding invitation, programs, labels and cages.

Our love for words and games was also emphasized in the wedding program, which included a crossword and word search puzzle about us.

To reflect the festive mood of the day Scott and I wanted a joyful, emotional ceremony. Our recessional theme was the gratitude to be thrown at the couple. We looked at this as an opportunity to be creative. Thus, we handmade over 700 pom pompoms of bright yellow, blue and green for our guests to toss.

We also made pinwheels that were scattered throughout the reception site, and our very own photo-wall photo booth, which allowed guests to have fun and create lasting memories for us.

Scott and I enjoy cooking and baking, and in order to show our deepest gratitude to our guests who had traveled far and long to share in our special day I personally cooked harvest kitchen meals at home.

After months of planning and traveling back and forth to South Carolina, everything was ordered and ran in very. Scott and I took one last trip to visit our wedding site.

Up on the cliff, I made sure of a quick honeymoon. I asked Scott and thought it would be a perfect time for pre-ceremony photographs. I suggested we launch on the owner's door and ask if we could use their house for our wedding portraits, but after much deliberation, Scott and I agreed it would not be appropriate to ask in such an exclusive community.

Surprise, surprise!

Back in the Philippines, my mother hosted two wedding ceremonies for family friends, which included our family dentist of several years. Dr. Elena Gonzales. Although the dentist and her family could not make it to the wedding, in true Filipino spirit, she gave my parents a monetary contribution of her brother, who happened to live in Landrum, South Carolina.

We were not expecting that there would be a Filipino living in the community, but to our surprise, Scott's parents, Dr. Lind and Sarmiento, lived at the Cliffs!

Upon arrival, my mother called him. He was excited for the wedding and was generous enough to offer his home for anyone who needed a place to sleep in. He also introduced us to Jan and his family at their home. Together with my family, Jean and I accepted the invitation and came to visit.

It was as if God orchestrated everything and knew what would happen all along. As fate would have it, the house visited out to be the very house I had envisioned as the backdrop for our wedding preparations and photos. What a blessing!

Scott and I were amazed that

THE BRIDE with her parents Elvira and Alfredo Bayan

ATTENDANTS Ann Kimberly Brynildsen, Wendy Brynildsen, Keiko Tago-Brynildsen, (seated) Tracy Brynildsen, Dianne Bayan-Brynildsen, Ann Margaret Bayan

MANALO-VILLANUEVA

Ian T. Manalo will wed Cristine G. wang Villanueva at Iglesia de San Antonio on Oct. 8.

Bonus: Inked will design the bride's gown, a chain-lily bed will be with bouquet, beaded and trained with silk satin and scattered with pink rosettes. A sweetheart wedding gown with scallop lace edges the portrait neckline and bodice. A princess skirt flows for empire band, gown is made of Alencon silk material.

Milestones

We welcome announcements of weddings and engagements. Submit names of engaged couple, names of parents, date and place of wedding, and good daughter along with a photo of the couple and a shot of the bridal gown, if any, to the Inquirer, PO. Box 12007 Makati Central Post Office 1265 Makati City. E-mail to lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph. A photo of the bride and groom is required if the wedding has already taken place. Announcements will be printed depending on space availability and at the end of the month.

OLLERO DEBUT

Patricia Ollero, only daughter of Raymond and Catherine Ollero, will celebrate her 18th birthday with a dinner dance on Aug. 27 at Circle Place, Greenhills.

Kim Pineda designed the debutante's gown in iridescent sangreta Thai silk.

The skirt is made of monochromatic shades of pink silk organza in a "hankleaf" pattern embroidery. Satin appliqués, studded with crystals, complete the ensemble.

Editor Aries Espinosa

Special Advertising Feature on Travel

northern exposure

Breathtaking Batanes

The hills are alive in Batanes

Batanes' most famous lighthouse

Ivatan's traditional houses

Batanes is also home to wild cherches

Valugan Beach

Text and photos by Joel V. Nigos

Contrary to what most people still think, you'll not get stuck in Batanes for weeks if ever you get there one of these days and a typhoon suddenly wreck the province which would result in the cancellation of your return flight to Manila.

First, strong typhoons are a thing of the past for our country's northernmost group of islands. Blame ice floods maybe is the more appropriate to no climate change. Batanes perhaps has had enough of those typhoons and nature has its own way of letting the islands take it easy. For more. Second, the province is now being served by a leisure airline which has flights daily. So if you miss your flight today, you can still go back home in the succeeding days.

Misconception about Batanes abound that's why a lot of people are discouraged from going to the islands. One another barrier, Pagasa, often sees it as a monsoon point where forecasting typhoons even 600 km away. But there's something about the province that puts it in the list of the must places to see. Even with the notion of stormy weather, you'll still be greeted with sunshine and awe when you tell somebody that you're going to Batanes!

Summer in Batanes is actually from June to August. So when Manila and the rest of the country are battered by one typhoon after another since it's the rainy season, it's all sunny days in the islands. Its weather pattern is attributed to its proximity to Taiwan or to temperate countries. Batanes also experiences four seasons, as compared to the rest of the country which has only two. Hot is from September to November, winter is from December to February, and spring is from March to May.

Breathtaking hills, lush greenery

In Batan, the province's biggest island, is where you can find Mahatao beach. Devoid of white or powdery sand, Mahatao is a boulder beach with reef and pebble stones. The huge stones here are believed to have come from Mt. Iraya's eruption in 400 AD.

At Nakil Hills, an old settlement, is one of the most picturesque lighthouses. Vayang Ranch (Sabtang Hills) provides lush greenery as well as spectacular views of the ocean.

Para by also the famous Honesty Store, the only one in the country. Visitors here are asked to take their pick among the goodies and just drop their payments in the box provided. This store has become the symbol of the Ivatan's honesty system.

At Basco's Hyanam (aka Mayflower country), are breathtaking hills and valleys, mountains and coastlines. It's also one huge cattle farm where cows and goats roam freely. This is their home, they appear to tell you as they wag their tails and gaze at visitors who come their way.

Roller-coaster ride

In Sabtang Island, which usually takes about 45 minutes of a roller-coaster boat ride from Basco, is where you can find the Savidug terrace-like houses and a traditional boat lifter. Sabtang is the smallest among the province's three islands. The other is Itbayat, about four hours away.

The Chavayanes Traditional Ivatan Village also provides a glimpse of the old ways of the native folks. Known for its old houses, traditions and hospitable villagers, houses here are open even when there's no one around. Filipil with their product and household and personal belongings, you can enter a house and even take pictures. Asking permission first is most courteous.

Chavayanes, by the way, is a Unesco-nominated world heritage site.

Don't salvage you can also find Nakabuang Beach, which is known for its rock arch formation in a private cove. Perfect for picnic lunch, swimming, sunbathing, or you can just laze the afternoon away.

You can also spend the night at Valmaji's heritage center which provides the most basic comforts for a minimal fee. It's on sale in Sabtang that people do not close their doors even at night, the friendly staff would often tell you.

Batanes is also home to old churches. In Mahatao town is where you can find the St. Christ Ecce Homo Church and in Ivana town the St. Joseph the Worker Church. Both were built around 1700s. A modern church called Tukon is made of boulders and has symbolisms that represent all of the province's towns.

Most antique culture

Batanes has one of the most unique traditions in the world. Isolated from the rest of the archipelago during the earlier times, the Ivatans have learned to find for themselves thereby developing a culture of self-reliance and resourcefulness.

Former Batanes Gov. Telesforo Cunfan, a native Ivatan himself, claimed that there are no homeless people and beggars in the islands. Everybody has his own piece of land to cultivate and everyone eats three square meals a day. Native folks are also a happy people as they live simple lives devoid of pressures of city living.

"We are glad because our visitors are treated and appreciate our culture. Whatever we have, they too. Hence it wholeheartedly. It's also a pat on the back on us and an affirmation that what we're doing here in Batanes is right," he says.

Unesco-nominated site

The province's rich heritage is mainly the reason why its Chavayan Village is a Unesco-nominated world heritage site.

Robert Bautista, consultant to the provincial tourism planning and tourism, termed it as the cultural landscape of Batanes brought about by the combined influences of man and nature. Nature imposed upon Batanese they should live and they responded accordingly in ways that is harmony with nature.

This cultural landscape can be found in every aspect of Ivatan living. Their stone houses that are spread like mushrooms but cubes are followed to their conservation. They are not alike by chance but they are designed that way and with the utmost diversity in mind. They are built to be sturdy to withstand even the strongest of typhoons. Ivatans also almost don't spend anything when they build their houses. Resourceful is deeply embedded to their culture as everybody helps in the building of a house. Materials are also mostly sourced locally.

Ivatans long before have also perfected the idea of self-reliance. They built hedgerows in their hills and cut logs so as to prevent soil erosion to preserve their source of livelihood. The way they tie their land is also very sustainable. They divide their land into parcels and they plant their crops on these parcels one at a time. This way, the natural fertility of the parcel has already returned when it's time to plant on it again. Up to this day, Ivatans practice organic farming as they do not use chemical fertilizers since the natural fertility of the soil is preserved.

Indeed, Batanes happened to be beautiful not only because its every little nook is enticing but more so since the ways of its people is in harmony with nature and this ought to be preserved.

Going there

Southeast Asian Airlines, a leisure airline, now flies to Batanes daily. SEAir began servicing the route in June 2008 with two flights a week and its flights has since grown exponentially. Manu 40 for commercial affairs Derrick Tan, "Helping develop tourist destinations has become our mission. Par bringing Batanes to the rest of the country, we're able to boost local economies and tourism. We're here for the long term. We want to provide people the chance to see Batanes."

Batanes Cultural Travel Agency which has tie-up with SEAir promotes the islands as well as its heritage. BCTA director Dr. Joel Mendoza shares that they want tourists to appreciate Batanes and its people and to make every tour as comfortable and enjoyable as possible.

Travelers who have gone to Batanes say that you cannot have bad photos in the islands. Just point and shoot your camera at will and you'll still have wonderful pictures. This says a lot about Batanes. Some people say it's undeniably a heaven on earth, carefully woven by God's silver hands. It could also be the most beautiful place in the country, if not in the whole world.

The trip to Batanes was made possible by Southeast Asian Airlines (www.flyseair.com, tel. no. 8090-0180) which now flies daily to the islands and the Batanes Cultural Travel Agency (www.batanestravel.com, tel. no. 478-5604 or 635-4815).

PAVILION that harks back to the '30s was added to the Museo.

CESAR Virata, Cora Alviña, Renato Linares, Dr Myrna Sienna and Joey Perlito

A classroom in a 19th-century . . .

From page E3

for Filipinos as well as providing the scientific that an academic environment needs for it to be dynamic.

Now on its 18th year, the Museo Ortigas opens an exhibit on the genesis of the museum, the first activity in a series of educational courses to celebrate in December. Entitled "The Genesis of the Museo De La Salle" highlights through photographic documentation, the groundbreaking and construction of the museum (a two-story building inspired by the 19th-century dormitories).

The opening of the exhibition was led by Brother Antonio Perez Jr., university chancellor of DLSU-Dasmariñas; Conie Weiss, Cora Alviña, Rozelle Gonzalez-Linares, Lourdes Bedaño and Jose Ma. Ricardo Pastilio. Refreshments were served in the museum's garden, a charming setting of shady trees and lush greenery where guests were free to walk around for the rest of the late afternoon.

The museum is inside the De La Salle Dasmariñas campus in Cavite.

Visit www.dasmu.dlsu.edu.ph.

STUDENTS look over the exhibit

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TOMO Takuma receives the Ascott grand prize from Chng Kee Hong, CEO of Lucas Residence Trust Management Limited.

Japanese wins Ascott grand draw

THE ASCOTT Limited recently celebrated its 15th anniversary. The Singapore-based serviced residence pioneer held a series of rewards for its customers culminating in a global grand draw. Guests staying at any Ascott property from April 1-December 2009 were eligible for the draw.

The winner was Tomo Takuma, who had stayed for a year at Citadines Ekamphol Sripan from April 2008-March 2009. His prize: a complimentary three-night stay every year for the next 25 years in any Ascott property worldwide.

Ascott flew the 33-year-old Shanghai-based Japanese expatriate to Singapore for the presentation at Ascott Raffles Place Singapore.

"I can't believe my luck. In Japan, winning a prize of such magnitude is unheard of. I have never won such a big prize in my life," said Takuma, who received the grand prize from Chong Kee Hiong, CEO of Ascott Residence Trust Management Limited.

In 2009, Ascott celebrated 21 successful years as the leader in the serviced residence industry, providing business and leisure travellers international-class accommodation that combines the space and privacy of an apartment with the services of a top-rated hotel.

"What makes Ascott special is the fact that their staff go out of their way to make me feel at home," said Takuma. "They take the initiative to know me well and understand my requirements. They take service very seriously and my requests were always attended to promptly. Such a high level of reliability is very important. I have stayed in many places where my requests are often forgotten."

The wine aficionado is looking forward to sampling the world's finest wines for his first complimentary stay with Ascott. He said, "I love red wine, and the first place I want to visit is the Ascott property in Bordeaux," he said, referring to Citadines Bordeaux Mérignac.

THE ASCOTT Makati in Ayala Avenue is at the heart of the Makati business district.

Sunday LIFESTYLE

Dr. C, Dr. Dee and Dr. T

Good doctors have special words for their favorite patients, hug them, stroke their backs, share a bit of their chocolate or some such gesture. It seals the healing

By Gilda Cordero-Fernando
Contributor

MY INTERNAL great grandfather, accorded by family legend, was captured by cobras (old-time bandits) while he was gathering medicinal plants in the mountains. They tied him up and left him with a lone guard. The story goes that Lolo Francisco soon came strolling back into town with the cobras in tow as his prisoners.

From then on, great grandpa got a reputation for possessing magic powers. This man further reinforced when the makabuhi bat roosted in the middle of his tree fold, where he sometimes rested, withdrawal a strong hypnosis while all the roofs in town blew away.

People went to Lolo Francisco because he was a healer. They attributed their cure to a second helping (incarnation) that they told to show knows. Actually he was an expert herbalist who had mastered the knowledge of medicinal plants. It was the 1800s and the Jesus reached Ireland and yet been established in the Philippines.

And so it was that his son, Narciso Sr., my father's father, also became a healer (this time with a degree). In an old known book, he is listed as one of the "Doctores of the Revolucion." He was then Pegaraljan's beloved and only physician.

After that, his son, Narciso Cordero Jr., was sent to Manila and became a doctor, too. That was my papa. Probably due to his surrender background, my father avoided taking drugs as much as possible, preferring to "allow the body its own healing process." It was my mama, who was not a doctor, who claimed to know all about drugs and pills and syrups (and prescribed them to anyone

BR, G-19

Dr. C, Dr. Dee and Dr. T

From page F1

who would listen.

Strange duckling

Between a quack and an "herbalista" lole I emerged, a strange duckling with a diverse but meditative. Back in Ilam I have been going to Dr. Ed Concepcion, the venerable acupuncturist of Magallanes Street, for 40 years now, consulting him for bodily aches, minor Chi, phone and nerve hooks.

Okay, so alternative medicine never makes you completely well (according to the patients chasing this hunch with me), but you never were yet too sick to treat. Dr. C makes you go to bed at 10, wear socks at night, eat organic food, no fish, no coke, no ice...Ay nako! But it contains me.

Recently, however, I had an attack of really painful old-age knee joints and could hardly walk. I began to ride a wheelchair for Mahal Pahong... only mother, Tarzana, who is 95, goes to Dr. Ed for her knees, too, and she can now walk again. And the Hon. Cesar Virata says his acupuncture has so improved with just faithful needling. So who am I to complain?

One day I dreamed that my Waray maid also had a remedy for my knee, learned from a grandfather who was a manduhadiong (witch doctor). No harm trying.

Brotherly the brought and cut up two large ginger bulbs and chopped and pounded them till juice began to seep out. She heated the pulp in a pan with a bit of massage oil. Then she wrapped the pulp in a dishtowel. This hot compress she dabbed on my tender knee, over in a while squeezing out the hot juice to massage on my legs and feet. While dabbing on the compress, the maid would mumble (more or less):

> Uhoy di ka to pa-cos-cos ha-ha-di ka la-ta-ngan-ngan-daha Tabadi ka la-ngah-ah-tan Upat di ka hampat Lima di ka mag-tima...dima Unam di ka la hinumdom-an tanang baha Pito Ilom to tuma-mimisid!

The effect was much like a fabulous, only deeper, more healing and longer lasting.

More medicine

Soon, I was ready for more of what my husband calls "voodoo" and what Jhum my friend Lyrla, a I had heard of Dr. Rita Tabda who did a different kind of naturopathy that had done her a lot of good. Like Dr. C, Dr. T is a western-trained (or "real") doctor who has chosen to practice alternative medicine. He is 39 years old, a bachelor, and handsome as all get out.

What he practices is integrative or body-mind medicine, an approach that a long visit Lyrla once explained as utilizing "a basket of techniques that addresses the patient as an indivisible structure and functional whole. Body-Mind discipline borrows heavily from neurolinguistic programming, osteopathy and preventive medicine. It also includes techniques for resolving emotional, mental and physical dysfunctions patterns." I was properly impressed.

He was doing the procedure in my house for my daughter-in-law, Dr. Rita Tabda, who had come from Cebu to do her post-graduate internship at the Philippine General Hospital. Dr. T made me stand up, assessed my body unfavorably, then my posture and my walk. He raised the flexibility of my neck, my shoulders, my jaw. He made me lie flat on my bed. I think he assessed the tension in my muscles. I think he (they were all three!). With the lightest of touch, he rearranged them, then proceeded to swill the fat around my afflicted knee. Lyrla explained to me later that Dr. T was not massaging the fat but was actually gurgling at the layer just beneath the skin that does its healing work better with a feather touch). Being a decades-long victim of my Waray's rough kneading, I couldn't understand it.

Dr. T did other things to my daughter-in-law because he diagnosed her with other things. Like Jhum's asthenia. She asked a lot of questions. Why were you palpating the trapezius muscle? And then the masseter? And the digastric muscle and sternocleido? Because those are also the ones we touch to determine when we have temporo-mandibular dysfunction. Which bone in the spine is out of line 21, 22 or 23-ish-ish? Dr. T would answer each one.

When their Russian language exchange was over, Dr. T made me stand up again. He took my knee. I could smile! I felt 60 percent healed, thanks to Dr. T's integrative. Dr. C's needles, the magnet dipped in the magma of some volcano that Marsel sent me and the Waray's kiya. It's now January. He has been very busy; swum a Tedali to his clinic and goes marathon hiking, which by hand I was able to do for a long while because he has a spacer of jasmine one kilometer long. At the end of the day he is so pooped, and looks like a gladiator ready to be dragged out.

Dr. Dee is an expert in angioplasty and obviously a straight Peruvian, meditator practitioner. So what is he doing in this article? Well, it is to represent all doctors, left, right or middle-intentioned, whose eating, routines and research are part of their equipment. When I am about on a headache, my husband just has to announce that Dr. Dee is coming down the aisle, for me to sit up and get ready with my sick. I know that he will bug me back and it will make me well.

Heard doctors have special wards for their favorite patients, Jing Bunis, stroke their barks, clean a bit of their chocolate or some such goodies. It seals the bonding. Some, like Medical City's Dr. Augusto Fernandez, have specialized Brits and can make dead women walk.

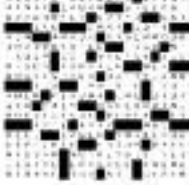
It only needed a quote, a few days later, from the New York Times Health section. (Danielle Ofri, MD) to confirm it. "The key to healing," she writes, "is to "select medical practitioners open from their counterparts in the business world. Despite the inroads of evidence-based medicine—MRIs, angiograms and PET scans—many Americans is searching clearly special, perhaps even healing, about touch.... It is inherently humanizing for a doctor patient relationship as more meaning be-yond that of a business interaction; these needs to be met. ...Until one of the most basic ways to establish trust is by touch. Fingers long have dyed(?)."

She continues, "I cringe whenever the hospital administration refers to doctors and nurses as health-care providers. It makes me feel like a dispenser at finger fling. I'm not a provider, I'm a person, a doctor. My patient is not a 'customer.' We are not managing a 'business.'"

And so for the patients of even the most skilled doctors, who possess no healing touch, those who lived not beset nor soul, they will simply wither and die.

Bye, now, but I have to be talented into a hospital to-examine and find the emergency door banging in my face.

(Ti, Dr Annabelle Ty, Dr. Oliver Cunha and Dr. Soothsayer Quisaga, my husband's favorite, I may darken your door if I run out of tuxedos.)



Jollibee and Transformers team-up for an adventure-packed party

Boys who want to celebrate their birthday in robot and adopt ways can now have their biggest party wishes come true at Jollibee, dashing get another exciting choice to the growing line-up of Jollibee Kids Party themes. Jollibee recently launched the Transformers Animated Jollibee Kids Party, thrilling young and young-at-heart fans of the popular show robots.

"In the past years, many girls and boys have enjoyed their Jollibee Kids Parties with fun and exciting themes like Hydrone and Jollibeats. But, we've realized that as boys get to their tween years, they want to have something more hip and edgy," Jollibee Brand manager Rachelle Encinas said.

The design from the presence of popular heroes Optimus Prime, Bumblebee, Ironhide, Ratchet and Proud another everyone as the media launch held in Jollibee Ortigas Restaurant last August 7. Guests experienced robot forming, customization can see Decepticon Chicken Barbecue, Jollibee Spaghetti and desserts like Chocolate Sundae and Jolly Crunchy Twirl. And since no birthday party would be complete without a cake, guests also sampled the Transformers animated birthday cake specially designed by Red Ribbon.

Shortly before the program, Transformers party hats and name tags were distributed to the guests. Some of the regulars spotted in the crowd were the kids' artist-celebrities from favorite shows Prime, Ramboodan and Magenta in the photobooth.

Heroes and kids teamed up for exciting Transformers themed games, all learning by the Jollibee Kids Party gift certificates and Transformers action figures at stake. The kids with the best Transformers costumes that also received a Transformers collectible toy as a prize.

As the party came to a close, the guests took home the adventure with them as they all received Transformers themed premium loot bags filled with collectibles, a Bumblebee toy, an activity book, and an Optimus Prime bubble.

With the new Transformers animated Jollibee Kids Party, boys can spend an exhilarating, non-stop day in the company of their robot idols, barbaric and friends – all while enjoying awesome meals and their favorite Jollibee treats.

Make sure you celebrate your kid's next important day at Jollibee and book them a Jollibee Kids Party now. Are can choose from exciting party themes like Jollibeats, Hydrone and Transformers Animated. Visit your nearest Jollibee store or www.jollibeekidsparty.com or call 888-7777 for details.

INTERNATIONAL FOOD STYLIST DELORES CUSTER LIVE IN MANILA!

It takes style and skill to build a sky-high cat sandwich. And she's got all the right moves to make it happen.

International food stylist Delores Custer will conduct a lecture-seminar on food styling in Cubao Restaurant, San Miguel by the Bay, SM Mall of Asia Complex, on Saturday, September 4, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. This time she lecture will include a copy of her book entitled "Food Styling: The Art of Preparing Food for the Camera," which will be given to all the seminar participants. Hot off the press from U.S. publisher John Wiley & Sons, it's the ultimate book (368 pages) on food styling and shows all you need to know to make food sweet eat and look great.

Who should attend:
Chefs, food writers, bloggers, restaurateurs and caterers, photographers and cinematographers, artists, creative directors and marketing directors, food manufacturers, food exporters and importers, culinary students and instructors, web designers, home cooks and basically and all food enthusiasts.

Hot topics during the seminar will include:
- How to make soups in the raw
- Creating food effects and non-nutritive recipes
- Building your portfolio
- Troubleshooting on the set
- Meeting the client standard in food styling
- How to work faster than sad
- Secret-ive ice cremes
- And the secrets of great recipes and cookbook writing

The seminar will include two catered food, "Food Styling: The Art of Preparing Food for the Camera" (worth P4,000), a delicious lunch to be prepared by CCA-Oceania Buffet, coffee breaks of coffee and a chance to win exciting raffle prizes!

The seminar is being co-presented by National Book Store, Food Magazine and Lifestyle Network, with Jolly Bee, Nutri-Asia, the Center for Culinary Arts (CCA) and Oceania Restaurant as major sponsors, the Philippine Daily Inquirer as a media partner and Sofitel Hotel as the official hotel.

Tickets are available at all Ticketworld outlets: P6,000 for the early bird, until August 31; and P7,000 after August 31. Call Ticketworld at 891-9999 or visit their website at www.ticketworld.com.ph.

WHO WILL BE SM'S LITTLE STARS 2010?

The Grand Finals of the SM Little Star Pageant on August 22 at the Music Hall of the SM Mall of Asia is a culmination of a month long search wherein 5,000 kids aged 4 to 7 all over the country registered to join the search. Sixteen pairs were chosen during the Regional Finals and the winning pairs will be chosen on the following criteria: 40% for Talent, 30% for Personality, and 30% for Star Quality.

Who among us the next SM Little Stars? Let's take a quick look at some of the finalists:

In the Metro Manila area, SM City Bicutan's Lexus Libres and SM City Manila's Akira Viane Bajao both want to become doctors someday, but in the meantime are honing their talents as a singers and dramatic actress, respectively.

In the Luzon area, we can see the beginnings of young stars – Pampanga's Kenen Mitsaric dreams of being a great performer, and Baguio's Nichole Morgan wants to become a singer and supermodel. Sta. Rosa's Anton Rakin Macatrao, on the other hand, wants to be a chef or policeman, while Regia's Thara Kimberly Mateng wants to be a nurse.

The contest also drew a lot of great looks and talent from the Vismin region. SM City Cebu's Angelo Gilas Cordara and Nikole Dajoe Sabastian both love to sing and dance. SM City Bacolod's Ronuel Salvan wants to be and inventor, while Michaela Advincula, a gifted storyteller, dreams of becoming an actress. SM City Iloilo's Khristiane Alistair Dumpit looks forward to being a policeman, while Dasiing Autumn Sulit also has acting in her mind.

SM City Davao's Antonio Paulino is a sports-minded kid who one day will fly high as a pilot, while Anya Maxine Cruz's multi-faceted talents – singing, dancing, modeling, and acting – don't stop her from dreaming about becoming a doctor someday. SM City Cagayan de Oro's Johnny Regana and Sarah Aphrodite Rakunti, both love to read, dance, and sing.

SM Little Stars 2010 is one of the many exciting events of the SM Supermalls.

Special Advertising Feature on

In fitness and in health

Health

Lifestyle Asian Experience

Rice and shine for good health

By Michelle Veloso

A HEALTHY living always starts with healthy food intake.

Many health products have sprung over the past few years, holding the promise of better nutrition, healthy digestion, weight loss and other favorable effects toward wellness. However, experts still do not rule out the basic multiclass of healthy living like regular exercise, ample water intake, and a well-balanced diet.

But getting healthier has found new companions to make the process easier and more effective. Filipinos are now more conscious about the many lifestyle diseases and harmful elements that threaten to weaken our defenses. They are reasonably more receptive to new and innovative ways to prevent deadly illnesses like cancer, diabetes and heart disease. Turns out, everyone has responded to the call for better awareness and need for action on each individual's responsibility to take care of their health even more.

The brown rice brigade

Rice is an important part of every Filipino meal. According to the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics (BRAETC), 23 million poor Filipinos (including children) get majority of their nutrients and 80 to 70% of their energy from rice. Hence, there is a need to ensure our supply of rice healthier and equipped with the essential vitamins and minerals, fat, protein, fiber and micro nutrients.

The rice that we are now familiar with is mostly variants of the white rice. However, a change of color can make a difference.

Brown rice, also known as Pinawa, is an unpolished, dehulled, debanded, and germ that is similar in nature to brown rice in the amount of calories, carbohydrates, fats, and protein contained. Brown rice packs more nutrients to because the bran and the embryo - where most of the other nutrients are found - are left intact in the milling process.

Studies show that brown rice can be considered as a functional food that can improve the function of the alimentary system and in the management of degenerative disorders. According to the material published by BRADS, brown rice is an inexpensive source of energy and substantial source of vitamins, minerals and other non-nutritive active components that have significant health benefits as a dietary staple.

Moreover, in the average Filipino diet, 160 grams of boiled white polished rice per meal constitutes 50 to 80 percent of the energy intake among children and adults. But it has been reported that various nutrients are removed from white polished rice, including as much as 15% protein, 80% fat, 50% calcium, 75% phosphorus, 80% thiamine, 78% riboflavin, and 68% niacin. Complete milling destroys half of the manganese, 84% of the iron and all of the dietary fibers and essential fatty acids.

Conclusive consumption of brown rice greatly helps in the way of protecting against sicknesses such as metabolic disorders, cardiovascular diseases, the formation of gallstones, as well as certain types of cancer," said Henry Lim, chairman & CEO of SL Agritech Corporation (SLAC), the company that sells the popular Oryza Sativa Brown Rice varieties.

As new time you decide to add rice to your diet, you can opt for the brown rice to pursue a healthier living.

Maybe you're diabetic and you don't even know it

DO YOU often feel thirsty? Do you usually get tired? Do you urinate more than the usual especially at night? If you answered 'yes' to all questions, chances are, you are suffering from diabetes, and you don't even know it!

Referred to as the "Silent Killer," diabetes is one of the world's leading causes of death. Like a thief in the night, it causes one's blood sugar level to rise without any warning. In fact, most people go through years and years of productive living without a hint that they are suffering from diabetes.

Diabetes is actually the result of poor diet and lack of physical activity. According to Dr. Leonel Tuipajan, an internist and noted Diabetologist: "Most people think that if they don't eat sweets, they are spared from diabetes. If your diet is high in fat and carbohydrates, you can become diabetic."

Other symptoms of the disease are feeling of lethargy, excessive weight gain or loss, and blurry vision. Once afflicted, patients have to deal with its maintenance forever.

Through the years, various herbal medicines have been discovered to regulate the blood sugar level of diabetic patients. One of the most successful was developed through the *Ayurvedic* medical system, a kind of treatment that has been practiced in India for more than five thousand years.

Ayurveda's influences on the development of modern medicine is well documented. In fact, the principles of many natural healing systems now familiar in the West...such as Homeopathy and Polarity Therapy, have their roots in Ayurveda. Today, Ayurveda has gained international recognition, especially in the Western world as a form of alternative medicine.

Ayurvedic preparations are made from different herbs, each with a special ingredient to fight the root cause and the complications of the disease.

One such Ayurvedic formula which was traditionally used for the control and prevention of diabetes mellitus type 2 consists Azadirachta Indica, Trigonella Foenum Graecum, Curcuma Longa, Phyllanthus Emblica, Terminalia Chebula, Terminalia Bellerica, Syzygium Cumini, Tribulus Terrestris, and Gymnema Sylvestre. The synergistic effect of these herbs possess potent anti-diabetic, anti-inflammatory, rejuvenative, blood purificatory, immunological, and antioxidants properties. And these nine herbs can only be found in Cogent db+.

Together with prescribed medicines, Cogent db+ is able to control blood glucose. It was also found to contain properties that are able to help lower elevated blood sugar levels, repair pancreatic cell damage, boosts the immune system to withstand diabetes-associated infections, serves as a powerful antioxidant fighting free radical damage, helps heal erectile dysfunction in men, and sexual dysfunction in females, with no side effects.

Morning breath matters

Having bad breath is not healthy for you and your partner

By Kenneth M. del Rosario

PEOPLE the world over suffer from morning breath, a condition caused by the dryness of the tongue, teeth, gums and throat that wasn't properly flossed before sleep.

Interestingly, in Jewish Law, bad breath alone can be a ground for divorce. And what's worse than waking up with your spouse's not-so-sweet morning breath?

This dreaded, also due to lack of saliva during sleep, becomes susceptible to bacteria that can break down proteins and release smelly waste products called Volatile Sulphur Compounds.

Like it or not, until bacteria grows quickly when we sleep that causes bad morning breath. You will make up with sticky, smelling slimy saliva which your partner and yourself will surely not appreciate.

Good oral hygiene is one key to prevent this unflattering case. Another is visiting the dentist and asking for professional help especially for severe cases. But for most, you can do it yourself when you have budget constraints due to all the bills. is to find a therapeutic toothpaste that will do the job.

Therapeutic toothpaste contains two or more herbal extracts plus other natural ingredients (or even other herbs) that have been proven to prevent certain illnesses or diseases. An example of which is the Dentavit Highdown Herbal Toothpaste, especially made for couples, by helping prevent tooth from cavities and keeps mouth and gums healthy and free from bad breath - even in the mornings.

Dentavit contains 14 different herbal (natural) extracts that have (are) antiseptic, anti-inflammatory and anti-bacterial properties, so you're sure that you only brush with naturally safe, toxic-free ingredients while keeping your teeth and gums healthy and strong.

The addition of Xylitol, Micronized Silica Complex, CDR (Cyclodextrin Complex) and Stable Vitamin C also help prevent bacteria build up in your mouth throughout the day (especially at night). Xylitol is a very much friendly sweetener that has been proven to effectively prevent dental caries or cavities. Vitamin C, on the other hand, is good for the gums stimulation that helps prevent periodontal or gum disease, while CDR keeps bad odors away and Micronized Silica Complex is clinically proven effective to soothe sensitive teeth and whitens teeth too.

Now the Ounce of bad breath against your marriage is saved by Dentavit the 1st Nighttime (special) Toothpaste through its refreshing and herbapeutic capability that is perfect for every couple's need.

Lifestyle change is key to quality life

By Kenneth M. del Rosario

THE FIRST major step in order to enjoy quality life despite diabetes is to be aware of the disease and find out ways on how to manage it.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the prevalence of diabetes is increasing rapidly to date than anywhere else. In the Philippines, there are about four million diabetics. Unfortunately, only 10 percent of that number knows they have the disease and only an estimated 250,000 are doing something about it.

Before any complication sets in, a diabetic should adopt helpful measures. Being practical is wise. For starters, having a regular consultation to keep your blood sugar in check is ideal. Ensuring stable sugar levels can help you live a longer and healthy life free from stroke, fatigue, and other related diseases. Sugar count is the biggest issue in knowing what makes your sugar level rise and fall is important.

Essentially, managing diabetes involves "lifestyle change" but it doesn't have to be too drastic. Healthy eating is important but it's not just what you eat that affects your blood sugar how much you eat and when you eat matters, too.

Here are some helpful tips from Diabetes Watch, a leading nutrition provider for diabetics on how to start improving your lifestyle:

• Be consistent in portions - One's blood sugar level is highest an hour or two after a meal, and then it starts to fall. But the predictable pattern can work to your advantage. Simply eating about the same amount of food at about the same time every day helps.

• Know the carbs - Carbohydrates have a bigger effect on your system's sugar level than does protein or fat. Eating the same portion of complex carbohydrates more or less at each meal (or snack) will help keep your sugar level steady throughout the day.

• Burn that extra sugar - When you exercise, your muscles use glucose for energy. Regular physical activity also improves your body's response to insulin. These factors work together to improve one's sugar level.

• Coordinate meals and medication intake - Be sure to eat regularly so that your medications, especially insulin, may not result in dangerously low blood sugar (hypoglycemia). Too much food, on the other hand, may cause blood sugar levels to climb (hyperglycemia). Just aim to strike a balance.

Diabetasol is a safe, specially formulated food drink based on AIA formulas, to fortify your breakfast and snack health habit designed to help reduce the risks of diabetic complications. Diabetasol also provides the 13 essential vitamins and minerals at least 25 nutrients that are important to daily nutrition, with great flavors like diabetic consumers enjoy: Chocolate, Cappuccino, and Vanilla.

Don't let DIABETES bring you down.

Having diabetes can change your life dramatically. And if not managed properly, it can lead to serious complications like heart disease, kidney failure, blindness, and stroke.

Good thing there's Cogent db+. It's an herbal supplement that contains nine herbs traditionally used in Ayurvedic medicine for thousands of years to help prevent and manage diabetes and its complications.

Published clinical studies have shown that taking Cogent db+ together with your prescribed oral medication helps provide the following benefits:

- Lowers elevated blood sugar levels
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- Boosts the immune system to withstand diabetes-associated infections
- Sustains energy and promotes general well-being
- Serves as a powerful antioxidant fighting free radical damage
- Helps heal diabetes-induced impotence in males and sexual dysfunction in females
- Safe, efficacious and no side effects

AN AYURVEDIC SUPPLEMENT FOR DIABETIC CARE THAT WORKS!

MANAGING CHRONIC DISEASES WITH WATSONS PHARMACY

Chronic diseases are illnesses that are persistent or recurring, typically affecting a person for three months or longer. This can even span a lifetime in some cases. These are hereditary rather than infectious, and can also be caused by lifestyle and environmental factors such as poor diet, consuming toxic substances, and living a sedentary lifestyle.

While these illnesses may not appear to be life threatening, a report by the World Health Organization says that in 2005 alone, chronic diseases caused 60% of all deaths in that year.

The good news is that these diseases can be treated or managed so patients can spend more time living and less time worrying. Here, Watsons Pharmacy shares with us some basics on diabetes and hypertension, two chronic diseases affecting many Filipinos, and how we can prevent and manage these.

THE DIABETES DIARIES

High blood sugar levels mark diabetes mellitus, or simply diabetes. This occurs when the body does not respond to or produces enough insulin – a hormone converting sugar into the energy we need for our daily activities. Department of Health statistics show that it affects 1 out of 20 Filipinos and is ranked as the sixth leading cause of deaths in the country.

Diabetes is a potentially life threatening condition since it is often associated with long term damage and organ failure, especially in the eyes, kidneys, nerves, heart, and blood vessels.

What it is often called the silent killer, because one can have it without knowing it, there are some symptoms to watch out for. These include blurred vision, fatigue, frequent urination, excessive thirst, increased appetite, unexplained weight loss, and having a blood sugar level higher than 200mg/dl.

While the key to preventing or managing diabetes is by complying with the doctor's orders – taking oral medicine or insulin shots, or both – a lifestyle change can make a difference. This includes:

• Regular monitoring of your blood sugar level
• Exercise and a healthy diet
• Saying no to calorie and cholesterol
• Limiting your salt and fat intake
• Avoiding processed foods and beverages, especially those containing high fructose corn syrup, white flour, or trans fat
• Opting for high fiber carbohydrates, lean proteins, leafy greens, whole grains, and nuts
• Also, do not skip or delay meals to avoid fluctuations in blood sugar levels.

Monitor your blood glucose with Accu-Chek.

HELP FOR HYPERTENSION

Hypertension or high blood pressure is considered another silent killer because like diabetes, it does not have any serious symptoms that may cause some alarm. In fact, one can have hypertension for years without knowing it.

The amount of blood pumped by your heart and the amount of resistance to blood flow in your arteries determines your blood pressure. The intense pressure of blood vessels, as well as having high cholesterol levels, contribute to high blood pressure. This can cause your arteries to rupture and lead to cardiovascular disease, a stroke, or even heart failure.

But the positive side to all these is that blood pressure can easily be detected and monitored. Once you are aware you have high blood pressure, you can work with your doctor to control it.

How to prevent or control it? Have your BP checked regularly – 140/90 mmHg and above is considered borderline or elevated. Also, it's best to lead a healthy lifestyle with regular exercise and proper diet. Avoid sodium rich foods, especially those that are processed or canned, as well as hydrogenated fats, fatty meat cuts, and other saturated fats and trans fats. Adding potassium and vitamin E rich foods to your diet is also helpful.

Customers may also have their blood pressure checked during mornings of Mondays to Thursdays.

COMPLIANCE IS KEY

There's no known cure for both diabetes and hypertension, and most other chronic diseases. But this should not stop you from pursuing your daily activities, and living your life the way you want to.

You can manage chronic ailments with the proper lifestyle – a healthy diet and regular exercise, avoiding alcohol and smoking, and by watching out for the specific health indicators of these ailments.

But another way to manage this, and perhaps the most important is through medication compliance. This means simply following your doctor's advice on the correct dosage and frequency of your medication – with or without the presence of symptoms.

Often times, patients are tempted to stop taking medication when they become symptom free, thinking that the ailment has gone away. But thinking this way can prove to be dangerous to one's health, since chronic diseases can creep back anytime. This false sense of complacency can aid in the ailment's progression and eventually lead to serious and even fatal complications.

WATSONS LAUNCHES BREAKTHROUGH COMPLIANCE PROGRAM

In support of the government's P-100 program to help patients manage chronic diseases, Watsons Pharmacy and Pfizer are hands in everything the high-quality, affordable Compliance Pack. Shown in photo (L-R) are Pascual Laboratories Chairman of the Board Manuel Zacarias, Watsons Chief Operating Officer Robert Sun, Pfizer Health Corp President Tomas Rotondo Agana III, Watsons Health Business Unit Director Lyle Joseph Martel and Department of Health Undersecretary Atty. Alex Padilla and National Center for Pharmaceutical Access and Management Program Manager Robert Su.

Pfizer Health Corp. President and CEO Tomas Rotondo Agana III and Watsons Health Business director Lyle Joseph Martel present the Compliance Pack, a breakthrough program to help hypertensive, diabetic and high cholesterol patients adhere to their prescribed medicine regimen.

Acknowledging the increasing rate of Filipinos affected by chronic lifestyle diseases such as diabetes, hypertension and high cholesterol, Watsons Pharmacy, one of the country's leading and trusted drugstore retail chains has launched a breakthrough program, the Compliance Pack.

The program, which is in partnership with Pfizer Health Corp, one of the country's pioneers in generic medicines, aims to help patients effectively manage their illnesses via strict compliance to prescribed medicines.

The new Compliance Pack gives patients better access to high quality, effective, and affordable medications. Packaged in easy to dispense blister packs, it contains a month long supply of commonly prescribed medications such as Amlodipine and Losartan for hypertension, as well as Metformin for diabetes and Simvastatin for high cholesterol.

Available in packs of 30s, it minimizes the chance of the patient running out of his supply of medicines. The compliance pack also addresses the problem of affordability, as one can save as much as 40% versus the Maximum Drug Retail Price of multinational brands and over 17% versus tablets bought by piece. It also features a pill reminder to patients who remember to buy their medicines before the current pack runs out and includes educator materials in every pack to help them better understand their disease.

To make compliance even more cost-effective for patients, the Watsons Compliance Pack comes with a rewards program, which encourages them to continuously take their medicines and lead a healthier lifestyle. The rewards program, which is exclusive to Compliance Pack users, allows them to avail of great discounts and freebies from healthcare partners such as Otsuka, InPhinite Diagnostics, Accu-Chek, Sports Central, Adidas, Nike, and Watsons Singlebalik.

With the right lifestyle choices, and 100% compliance to your doctor-prescribed medicine regimen through the Compliance Pack, hypertension, diabetes and high cholesterol are manageable.

Visit any Watsons Pharmacy and make your every step of your compliance rewarding. The Watsons Compliance Pack is exclusively available at all Watsons Pharmacies nationwide.

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Emmie G. Velarde

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Most dangerous online celeb

SAN FRANCISCO—Cameron Diaz on Thursday topped a McAfee computer security firm list of the most dangerous online celebrities. Diaz was ranked just a step ahead of box office powerhouse Julia Roberts when it came to cyber crooks using their names to lure Internet users to bogus websites booby-trapped with malicious software. AFP

DID YOU KNOW...

Saving classic Filipino films in a time of climate change

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

AS THE COUNTRY reels from the hottest year on record, severe germ can silently and irretrievably deteriorating.

The situation can only be described as "urgent," said Dan del Mundo, president of Sofia, or Society of Filipino Archivists for Film (Sofia).

"Our studio-vaued heritage is disappearing with each passing day," Del Mundo noted. These films can be considered "national treasures," he stressed, and they are deteriorating slow, simply enough, in the country's hot and humid weather.

"Without proper storage, we could lose these films to the 'vinegar syndrome,'" he explained.

According to an Internet report, "When the backing of acetate films begins to degrade, it releases acetic acid (which has the smell of vinegar)."

This vinegar syndrome is irreversible but can be slowed down with the right temperature and humidity conditions. "So it's vital for films to be stored in air-conditioned, climate-controlled storage facilities, mind the shrink," said Del Mundo.

> They could be forever lost to the 'vinegar syndrome'

The collection gathered by the Sofia and the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) are currently kept on the third floor of the Production Design Center (at the back of the CCP).

"Problem is, our brand-new air-conditioners just broke down," said Vicky Belarmino, vice-president of Sofia. "We learned that the films' acidity—the vinegar effect—was damaging the air-con units."

Among the titles in the CCP collection are Edmund Reveal's "Manila By Night," Marilou Diaz-Abaya's "Abakay," Mike de Leon's "Batch '81," Eddie Romero's "Limite Kami Sosa, Hanee Kaye Ngayon," Lino Brocka's "Tinimbang Ka Ngunit Kulang" and "Inang," to name a few.

"The CCP kept the prints

MARIEL CZ

Lovi flew to HK, the mother of Ronald's child didn't

BEFORE LOVI POR, there was Ria Saraza in the life of Ronald Singson. Was Rad copied from Hollywood.

Ronald Dingson's gorgeous ex, 21-year-old Ria Saraza (left photo), is relieved that he is out on bail. Their 2-year-old love child Samantha is currently in Hong Kong visiting her dad.

Ria and Ronald were last a confirmed item through a threat. Although Ria is "connected" about her ex, she would rather not fly to the Korean British colony because it might mean tension between her and Ronald's current girlfriend Lovi Poe. The women once had a verbal tussle in Indonesia remember, Gretchen S. But I'm sure they are capable of setting aside their differences at this time, when they have one desire in common, which is Ronald's freedom. Andy Arno Lavrador

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PLDT

Aniston, Hathaway, Tyler victims of salon fraud

LOS ANGELES—Maria Gabriella Perez, owner of Chez Gabriela Studio in Beverly Hills, was arrested on Wednesday on charges of stealing credit card information from Jennifer Aniston, Anne Hathaway and Liv Tyler and running up tens of thousands of fraudulent payments on their accounts. According to court documents, a witness claimed that Chez, Melanie Griffith and Scott Speedman were also victims of the fraud. Perez is accused of swindling $25,000 from Tyler alone last year, according to a court affidavit. Reuters

Saving classic Filipino films . . .

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Saving the prints and negatives in separate facilities is a safety precaution, according to Del Mundo.

"The Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP), Del Mundo added, is mandated to begin archiving efforts.

"With the FDCP, we've already drafted a priority list of films to be saved," Del Mundo explained.

Among the 40 titles in the priority list are the works of National Artists Eike Bernal's "Banal sa Aking" (1976), Lamberto Avellana's "Dugso" (1957) and Gerry de Leon's "Tanan sa Lantang Binhasyo" (1952).

The FDCP archiving project encountered a major stumbling block in its issue of funding (or lack of it), Del Mundo said. He expressed the hope that the next administration, with the help of the private sector, could continue the archiving efforts.

National pride

"In 1998, the estimate was that, with P200 million, we could build a modest National Film Archive building. It doesn't have to be a huge structure, but we need to start it," said Del Mundo.

It's a matter of "national pride," he said. "Other Southeast Asia countries like Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia have their own national film archives. Singapore has national archives and separate archives on Asian cinema, which includes the works of Mike de Leon."

Another way to sustain the archiving movement is to introduce to young people its importance.

Toward this end, Ardin is screening a unique festival of rediscovered classics called "Overlooked Films...Underrated Filmmakers" which will run until January next year.

Each Sunday, a "lost" film will be screened at the CCP's Tanghalang Manuel Conde.

E-mail bayanihan@inquirer.com.

Absolutely no more . . .

Front page

similar to his 1980s program "Not So Late Night with Bibo," but "topics will be broader and more relevant," he noted.

"My shipmates honore and I would also develop shows that I like," he added. "I could also appear on other GMA 7 programs.

My work there is not limited to just two shows."

Bibo also hopes to host a newsmagazine.

Last seen in the shows "OK Pare Whatever" in 2003, Bibo said he's still open to doing a sitcom/s, but only if the work schedule would be followed orderly.

Absolutely no more TV dancing for Edu

He will soon turn 55 and can't see how he should still be doing the 'Papaya'

By Marinel R. Cruz

ACTOR-TV host Edu Manzano said he refused to go back to hosting the ABS-CBN game show "Pilipinas Game KNB?" because, at 54, he felt too old to be seen dancing on TV.

"I'm turning 55 in a month," Edu told entertainment writers over lunch recently. "I can't see myself still dancing the 'Papaya' at that age. I remember trying to push myself to dance that, even if my hips were aching. I had no choice because it was the show's opening number."

In 2008, Edu, along with choreographer Mel Feliciano, named "Papaya," a swaggering play on words reminded by Polish singer Ursula Dudziak in the 1970s, into a global hit. It was featured on ABC's "Good Morning America," MSNBC and Reuters. YouTube still has several videos of the "Papaya" dance, including a version featuring Philippine army soldiers.

"The question my youngest son Enzo asked when he first heard I was going to host a new game show was, 'Tatay, are you going to dance?' Parang ayaw na niya," said Edu, whose big birthday is Sept. 14.

Exclusive deal

Edu recently signed a three-year exclusive contract with GMA 7. He will host the game show "Asan Tayo Pagdating Pasko?" starting next month.

"It will still be fun, even without the dancing," he said. "There will be more interaction with the contestants. I like the concept ... Pinoy-to-Pinoy."

"Sure 'Edu' will sir in the face meeting one size, just before the successful program "Eat ... Bulaga!"

Edu said the offer to transfer to GMA 7 came in late June. "It was a very good offer. I gave ABS-CBN 24 years of my life. I did what was expected of me. However, we also have to accept the fact that this is a business. GMA 7 said I would be the most effective host for the game show they wanted."

Edu will also be working on a talk show

Hosts with the ... least

IT WAS US variety shows and raucous game players Noel Mocki who, in the 1950s, popularized and stylized the term, "Disneyo with the Mouse."

Now, a decade into the new millennium, stylish, glittering and eventful hosting has become even more important on television, where many fine shows' impact on viewers is dependent to a significant extent on how well their assigned hosts do their jobs.

It's instructive to note that the TV hosting situation here has changed quite cleverly from how it was in the '50s, when pioneering programs from like Doc Manquiz, Tita Muñoz, Lolita Rodriguez, Eddie Mercado and other pacesetters helped establish the ground rules for others to follow.

First off, you on TV were more closely delineated then. You were a host, period, you featured on that one job, unlike here things are today when you may start out as a cute and bluky actor or singer, do a bit of program hosting on the side, handle a game show from time to time, act in the occasional telenovela—etc.

There days, "talents" are supposed to do everything well—and that's the first fallacy, because nobody is that good, they only think they are.

They also wrongly think that it's easy to become a good TV host—all you need to do is look cute, talk a blue streak and read the cheat cards (teleprompter) seamlessly else-wise.

Wrong.

What about establishing and evolving a show's unique "personality"? What about pacing, tempo, audience psychology, doing your homework so you don't come across as a beautiful zombie, the ability to ad-lib convincingly and seamlessly to get your points across and focus so you can get the best out of them when you interview them?

What about all those considerations that many of today's giddy and loud program hosts are so clueless about—what about them?

TV hosting is generally so bad in these parts because it's become so "easy" that anybody can can do it. So, to improve the local TV picture, the first radical change that needs to be effected is to leave the hosting only to people trained for and experienced in the job. So, can aced hosts announce with IQs below sea level need not apply [unless the show is being held in an aquarium].

That drastically clears the field, you'll agree.

Next caveat: Movie-TV actors and singers should be dissuaded from going into TV hosting. Wow, that's a really subversive and "crazy" stipulation, because the TV industry currently thrives on stars turned hosts, or "star"-hosts."

They became popular when TV producers realized they needed star value to get people to watch their new shows, so (bright idea!) perhaps they could hire birds with sex-some and get a popular young man to echo host a show?

Uh, not such bright idea. In fact, it's a downright dim and dismal notion, because it presumes that all stars are intelligent and know what good TV hosting requires. Alas, all that many stars can be depended on to know is how to be glittering and lovely personalities who love themselves to fluvvity, that they are consumed by their own favorite personal attributes, and thus expect viewers to fall head-over-heels in love with them, too!

In fact, quite a number of stars are so congenitally self-absorbed that it makes them bad TV hosts, because good hosts are supposed to think of their guests and viewers, not of themselves.

It's a complete contradiction that helps explain why the level of program hosting here is so low and lousy. There are a few exceptions, but they are so rare that they validate and prove that disturbing state.

So, instead of forcing stars to pass muster as hosts, our TV channels should discover, train and build up good, young hosts who have what it takes and know what good hosting is all about.

In time, they could become popular in their own right, like Lolita and Eddie decades ago, and the networks can have their cake and eat it, too—but, only then.

The TV hosts with the stars are those who have what the job really requires, and focus on their guests and viewers. The stars? Just surf through the small screen's offerings and you'll get all the examples you need... and they are legion.

By Adrienne Sarmiento-Buenaventura

What sets him apart is his heart for others

MANILA, Philippines — It's no surprise that Manila is teeming with talent ... Filipinos have always been known to be music-lovers, and have shown the world many times over that we are a musically-inclined race that can go toe-to-toe with international performers.

Switch on the television, and you're bound to see children trying their luck at talent shows left and right, all wanting to have a piece of the "15 minutes of fame" pie, to show everyone what they've got. They have a lot of reasons why they're on there ... perhaps not only to show off their talent, but also to help out their families, or to get discovered, gain fame, or simply just jumpstart their showbiz careers.

Child performers and child artists are a dime a dozen in Manila. And yes, a lot of them have got what it takes to make it big.

But in the mind of seven-year-old Athan Jesse, with his love for music, charming gift of gab, and inquisitive young mind, his world isn't all about himself or the dreams that he's had in his heart.

His compassion for others at a very young age is shaping the goals he has for the future. And with such great proportions, faith, and ample support from family and loved ones, he is sure to ride on his chosen star and blaze a trail of his own in the entertainment field. And perhaps then, we would be ready to welcome the country's first young singing humanitarian? We'll see!

Just Like Any Regular Kid?

Currently a second grader at the Fernwood Montessori School, Athan has always been a bright student. "I report how many? I will sing and I'm old!"

He is fortunate to be blessed with supportive parents who have encouraged this interest, and have taken steps to help and motivate him by being a vocal coach, and indulging his love for music videos and songs by Jan Mole. The Jesse Brothers' having his widest love for music and his passion for singing, he parents even encourage him to join fundraising events their family would spearhead, like his Christmas concert last year at Solaire.

It seems that this little boy is just like any other artistic boy his age who enjoys performing. But there is more to this little five-starter than meets the eye.

This little achiever's abilities don't only lie in his passionate pursuit for music and performing. He's also got a bright mind: he has been awarded a Gold Medal for Math (National Level) and a Silver Medal for Reading by Kumon Philippines.

What Sets Him Apart?

Athan is doubly blessed because his eyes have not only been opened to a life of privilege or unconditional love of family, but also equally exposed to the not-so-ideal realities of the less fortunate outside the walls of his home and school.

He caught a glimpse of this harsh truth when he was only four years old, one Christmas. He shares, "They always come to our house to ask for help from my dad. Some of them my Dadad said very, are sick. Some are very hungry and they don't have money to buy food ..." He goes on to say how he feels when he sees a poor child, "I feel sad sometimes I feel like crying."

In his own little way, Athan has been quietly doing his part in extending a helpful hand to the less fortunate. "I always give them goodies every Christmas. I give my old clothes to them. There was a poor kid who knocked on the window of our car and he looked so hungry so I gave him my only burger from Mcdonald's, and after that I felt very happy ... and a little bit hungry."

One can't help but smile at the innocence but sheer compassion of this little boy's heart. But it is obvious that his parents' good-hearted example of generosity is not lost on Athan. "I see my Mama and Dadad helping them, and I like to help them too."

Taking part in simple outreach activities have ignited the fires of giving and the sense of purpose in Athan. He makes one of his love for performing in these events that mean so much to him: "I love to host my Dadad's HATID-SAYA community outreach. I am always the emcee. I help Dadad everytime and it's so fun 'cause everybody is a winner, and when they win they jump so high! And I like to see them like that."

His has great hopes about changing the world. Starting with the cute five-year-only young from the wonderment and freshness of a child's hopeful heart, he goes on to share a few of his dreams: "I want the people to go anywhere they want to go like the dragdons, supermadad and hotels so they can get anything they want without paying. I want everybody to have a car so that when it rains they don't get wet."

On Music That Keeps On Giving

His heart for helping others translates also to some of his favorite songs about giving. Joy to the World by Nick Jonas when he was still a little boy. I love the lyrics "Everyday at Christmas all I can see are pictures of the things I want around the tree, but this year is a little different I'm not thinkin' of myself. So my prayer for this Christmas is for somebody else, so I pray, Joy to the World, Peace be every boy and girl ..." "I also like Heal the World and We are the World by Michael Jackson."

We've got here a not-so-ordinary child with an extraordinary desire to be part of something great for the greater good.

This is a little man with a mission.

Not all aspiring child artists or singers get their big breaks.

Athan was asked a very straightforward question, one uttered usually by children way older than his seven years: "If you were given the chance to become famous or popular, how would you use that to help others?"

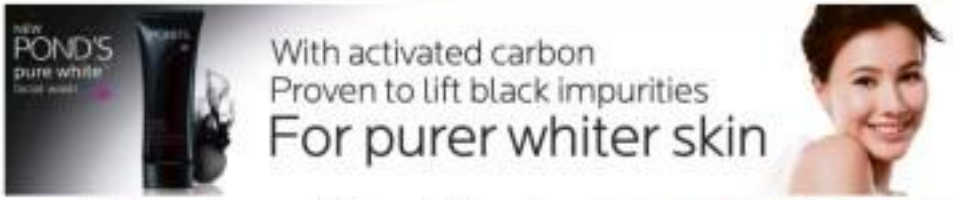
Athan Jaime's answer turns out to be simple, and yet awe-inspiring for anyone who gets to read it: "I will show them how to care for others so they can follow me."

A no-frills answer out of the mouth of babes. Well, make that, as it's been mentioned, out of the mouth of a little man with a mission.

Watch out, world! There's a little singing humanitarian out to rock you. Watch out for a write-up in the September issue of YES! Magazine about this compassionate little artist. And watch out for this young boy's first music video, currently being filmed and prepared to be shown very soon!

But more importantly, keep keeping your eyes peeled for this gold-hearted diamond in the rough, being primed for his turn in the spotlight. Athan Jaime! ■

ENTERTAINMENT



A Pinay in an Asian girl band

LOS ANGELES—Project Lotus, a talent search for a Oro-morphic Duo-Asian girl band, is holding live auditions in the Philippines on Aug. 30 and 31.

Founded by Jon Stevenson, host of the TV show "Asia Uncut" and former president of The Walt Disney Company in Asia, Project Lotus has already received gobs to come to the live auditions based on thousands of online submissions on its then-fresh Joe page.

Five girls will be chosen for the next round from each of those countries: The Philippines, China, India, Japan and Korea. The 25 girls who will attend six weeks of training at the Project Lotus Academy in Hong Kong will be narrowed down each week by Jon, producer Elliot Kennedy (a Grammy-winning songwriter), and others in the team. The final five, who will represent each of the countries included in the search, will comprise the act that will release its first single and mini album, and then tour next year.

"Charice is still fairly new to the scene and off to a great start for sure," Jon contended when we joined a statement in Project Lotus' media kit that these has never been an Asian singer who made it "big" in the West. It's one of the reasons for launching the search—to bring an Asian act on the global stage.

Jon clarified: "I meant an Asian group primarily. I hope Charice's success keeps growing. She's very talented. It's great for Asia and the global music scene."

There has been a strong start of live auditions in Hong Kong, said Jon, founder and CEO of The West Entertainment, which is promoting Project Lotus. At least of "Asia Uncut," which is taped in Shanghai (Hong Kong is the next season), Jon has interviewed Hollywood and Asian stars, including **Jackie Chan** and **Lea Salonga**, whom he described as "fun and a great guest." More about information about Project Lotus is available on www.projectlotus.tv.

Below are excerpts from our interview:

How did the English-singing Duo-Asian girl group search come about?

I have been intrigued for many years now why no Asian group has ever made it big in the West. Asia truly has some very talented artists, and it's time for the world to see them. Pulling in a key songwriter and producer like Elliot Kennedy who worked with the original Spice Girls was, in my mind, key to making this work.

From which country do the majority of the 3,000-plus entries come from?

The Philippines has certainly been very proactive with submissions, which is terrific. In fact, all of the countries we are focusing on have been responsive.

What are some of the unusual stories you've seen and heard?

Some of the most unusual have been those who choose not to "reveal" themselves, either using generic images over their voice or singing in a shadow. Of course, we needed to verify that it was truly these people singing, so that required some follow-up. But there's some stunning talent out there. We also did our own screening online, so we weren't just "waiting" for people to come; we went around to quickly spread.

What are the songs most often sung in auditions?

Contemporary **songs from some of** today's big singers were popular, but those who did some of the best entry submissions were very simple and elegant acoustic renditions of songs or even original material. If we can find a great singer who is a talented musician, we're really sweet.

So is there a production team in the Philippines that also reached out to "both interviewers and professionals"?

We got country managers to help us with the project in each of the countries where we did a search. In the Philippines, we had our country manager Makoto Bagi go around the different provinces and search for undiscovered, raw talents.

Professional singers are welcome. So even established female singers can join?

Our "Project Lotus" girls can't be signed by someone else for obvious reasons. So, we're searching for new talent or unprocessed singers and performers who are able to audition for another group at this stage.

How did you select the 20 songwriters who composed material for the band?

Elliot, who is also our creative director, put together an amazing writing camp at Peter Gabriel's Real World studio in the UK in June. He and his close friend Gary Barlow (from the group Take That) are only invested and invest, but they invited some of

a report on

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ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Rahnee V. Nepacker

Curious case of the casting couch

From page E4

autobiography "Me."

The Puerto Prinze singer is set to release his memoir on Nov. 2. It will be released in time for the same time as "Ke" (Spanish for "I").

Blanks has said that preparing to write the book was one of the reasons he decided to retire earlier this year that he can.

He said in a statement on Thursday that the project led him to extract memories that he had erased from his mind. AP

Top of the tabloids

The top three Ok stories in bizarre tabloid incidents last week. Until why we are stoned, if we are scared.)

- Zarpee Manolo: ayaw na sa mga babae. (Interesting.)
- Eva Aquino: ill awakes as agimat sa Jessa Sep. (Intriguing. So?)
- Jessa dinadroo-doobra si Eric. (It pseudo you—making audience?)
- Eric Wade: aborg dating labaha! (A. Jansen do!)
- Gretchen Barretto kay Angeline Quinto: I love her so! Obvious ding talaga yung sarcasm ng ex-girlfriend.
- Angeline, Zoren Jimenez at Claudine Barretto, dito what we heard.)
- Ibalong marquee sa Australia ang thinggot ni Robin Padilla kay Liezl Sycangco. Ilan ba mahihingot nga? Isa lang? Lot ng count them...)
- Bea Alonzo ayaw magpakabebe sa Cebu. (So we heard.)
- Marcel Rodriguez sensilo ng Filipinas, bumalik? (Could it be the airport security clerk?)
- Sabay raw nag-manga sa "Filipinas Who's Who." Hinted someone na kay Bebot si Sofia. (Just channeling "Eat, Pray, Love.")
- Brian Poman, Ed Mo baking ng, ayaw pang umamin. (Sus, para sa tanong...)
- Lovi Poe tawag nawa at pagkain ng (Lovey. JOF cuisine. Hong kong girl to kapwa?)

"AMERICANAH" author Barnwatch treat mga Ilonggo Tyler in Kara Dingcat-it-out.

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Greenbelt

A Pinay...

From page A4

the last minute in the business from around the world.

When was the deadline for the submission of entries?

The deadline was the beginning of August for the online submission. Then there are supporting eight up until the final auditions in each market. In the Philippines, we'll be there on Aug. 30 to 31.

What will you be looking for, aside from talent, during these live auditions?

First and foremost, they must be great singers. Beyond that, if they have other musical talent and can dance, that will certainly help their cause. Ultimately, it will be about the chemistry that the five final girls have together.

What if the five girls are not selected? Are not good enough?

We will select back-ups during the process. We certainly hope things go smoothly.

Have did you end up hosting a TV show that's taped in both Shanghai and Hong Kong?

"Asia Uncut" is about owning and being around different parts of Asia. Season One was based in Singapore. The next season we moved to Shanghai and next year, we'll be in Hong Kong. We shot segments all over Asia. It keeps us fresh and fun, and we have to show Asia to be about Asia.

Who among the Asian actors, singers and comedians who have guested in your show made the most impression on you?

I loved Lea Salonga when she was on the show! She really was fun and a great guest. In fact, some of our most lively guests have come from the Philippines. The best guests to us are those who are playful and really do something physical, or location or out of their comfort zone.

Has Charice guested in your show?

I would love to have Charice on the show! She is amazing and truly talented. She seems like she'd be an outstanding guest, so we'll pursue her until she hopefully says "Yes!"

E-mail the columnist at ninjo@yahoo.com.

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GALLERIA

1 SALT
2 THE EXPENDABLES
3 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
4 STEP UP 3
5 IN YOUR EYES
6 [illegible]
7 MAX MAN 3
8 MAGALOG
9 CROWN UPS
10 SPLICE

MANILA

1 SPLICE
2 THE EXPENDABLES
3 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
4 IP MAN 2
5 IN YOUR EYES
6 STEP UP 3
7 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE

METRO EAST

1 IP MAN 2
2 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
3 IN YOUR EYES
4 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
5 SPLICE
6 THE EXPENDABLES
7 STEP UP 3
8 SALT

NOVALICHES

1 THE EXPENDABLES
2 IN YOUR EYES
3 IP MAN 2
4 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE

FORUM ROBINSONS

1 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
2 IP MAN 2
3 IN YOUR EYES
4 THE EXPENDABLES

STA. ROSA

1 THE EXPENDABLES
2 SALT
3 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
4 IN YOUR EYES

LIPA

1 THE EXPENDABLES
2 THE EXPENDABLES
3 IN YOUR EYES
4 CROWN UPS

DASMARINAS

1 THE EXPENDABLES
2 SALT
3 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
4 IN YOUR EYES

STARMILLS

1 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
2 SALT
3 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
4 CROWN UPS
5 IN YOUR EYES
6 THE EXPENDABLES

IMUS

1 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
2 MAGALOG
3 THE EXPENDABLES
4 IN YOUR EYES

ANGELES

1 THE EXPENDABLES
2 IN YOUR EYES
3 MAGALOG
4 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE

TACLOBAN

1 THE LAST AIRBENDER
2 IN YOUR EYES
3 CROWN UPS

DUMAGUETE

1 CROWN UPS
2 THE LAST AIRBENDER
3 IN YOUR EYES

BACOLOD

1 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
2 GHOST HOUSE
3 THE EXPENDABLES
4 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
5 SALT
6 IN YOUR EYES

ILOILO

1 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
2 IN YOUR EYES
3 THE EXPENDABLES
4 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
5 CHLOE
6 SALT

GENSAN

1 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE OF KITTY GALORE
2 IN YOUR EYES
3 CROWN UPS
4 CHLOE

ILOCOS NORTE

1 THE LAST AIRBENDER
2 CROWN UPS
3 IN YOUR EYES

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ON CENTERMALL
ON MEGAMALL
ON BICUTAN
ON FAIRVIEW
ON CLARK
ON SAN LAZARO
ON BACOLOD
ON CEBU
ON MANDAUE
ON ILOILO
ON DAVAO
ON CAGAYAN DE ORO
ON GENSAN

metro manila

ON NORTH EDSA — 7 SCREENS
1 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
2 IP MAN 2
3 SPLICE
4 STEP UP 3
5 THE EXPENDABLES
6 IN YOUR EYES
7 SALT

ON MANILA — 4 SCREENS
1 SPLICE
2 THE EXPENDABLES
3 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
4 IP MAN 2

ON CENTERMALL — 4 SCREENS
1 IP MAN 2
2 THE EXPENDABLES
3 IN YOUR EYES
4 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE

ON MEGAMALL — 9 SCREENS
1 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
2 IP MAN 2
3 IN YOUR EYES
4 THE EXPENDABLES
5 SALT
6 SPLICE
7 THE LAST AIRBENDER
8 CROWN UPS
9 STEP UP 3

ON BICUTAN — 4 SCREENS
1 THE EXPENDABLES
2 IN YOUR EYES
3 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
4 CROWN UPS

ON FAIRVIEW — 4 SCREENS
1 THE EXPENDABLES
2 SALT
3 IN YOUR EYES
4 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE

ON CLARK — 4 SCREENS
1 IN YOUR EYES
2 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
3 THE EXPENDABLES
4 THE LAST AIRBENDER

ON SAN LAZARO — 4 SCREENS
1 IP MAN 2
2 SALT
3 THE EXPENDABLES
4 IN YOUR EYES

ON BACOLOD — 4 SCREENS
1 IN YOUR EYES
2 THE EXPENDABLES
3 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
4 SALT

ON CEBU — 4 SCREENS
1 IN YOUR EYES
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3 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
4 SALT

ON MANDAUE — 4 SCREENS
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3 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
4 SALT

ON ILOILO — 4 SCREENS
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ON CAGAYAN DE ORO — 4 SCREENS
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4 SALT

ON GENSAN — 4 SCREENS
1 IN YOUR EYES
2 THE EXPENDABLES
3 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
4 SALT

luzon

ON NORTH EDSA — 7 SCREENS
1 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
2 IP MAN 2
3 SPLICE
4 STEP UP 3
5 THE EXPENDABLES
6 IN YOUR EYES
7 SALT

ON MANILA — 4 SCREENS
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3 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
4 IP MAN 2

ON CENTERMALL — 4 SCREENS
1 IP MAN 2
2 THE EXPENDABLES
3 IN YOUR EYES
4 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE

ON MEGAMALL — 9 SCREENS
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2 IP MAN 2
3 IN YOUR EYES
4 THE EXPENDABLES
5 SALT
6 SPLICE
7 THE LAST AIRBENDER
8 CROWN UPS
9 STEP UP 3

ON BICUTAN — 4 SCREENS
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2 IN YOUR EYES
3 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
4 CROWN UPS

ON FAIRVIEW — 4 SCREENS
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2 SALT
3 IN YOUR EYES
4 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE

ON CLARK — 4 SCREENS
1 IN YOUR EYES
2 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
3 THE EXPENDABLES
4 THE LAST AIRBENDER

ON SAN LAZARO — 4 SCREENS
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4 IN YOUR EYES

ON BACOLOD — 4 SCREENS
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ON GENSAN — 4 SCREENS
1 IN YOUR EYES
2 THE EXPENDABLES
3 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
4 SALT

visayas • mindanao

ON NORTH EDSA — 7 SCREENS
1 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
2 IP MAN 2
3 SPLICE
4 STEP UP 3
5 THE EXPENDABLES
6 IN YOUR EYES
7 SALT

ON MANILA — 4 SCREENS
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2 THE EXPENDABLES
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4 IP MAN 2

ON CENTERMALL — 4 SCREENS
1 IP MAN 2
2 THE EXPENDABLES
3 IN YOUR EYES
4 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE

ON MEGAMALL — 9 SCREENS
1 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
2 IP MAN 2
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8 CROWN UPS
9 STEP UP 3

ON BICUTAN — 4 SCREENS
1 THE EXPENDABLES
2 IN YOUR EYES
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4 CROWN UPS

ON FAIRVIEW — 4 SCREENS
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4 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE

ON CLARK — 4 SCREENS
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4 SALT

ON GENSAN — 4 SCREENS
1 IN YOUR EYES
2 THE EXPENDABLES
3 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
4 SALT

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Curious case of the casting couch

By the Entertainment staff

NOT A FEW adults in this major studio know about the "casting couch conspiracy."

Three Gay leaders have been "threatening" Hunky Actors in exchange for gross projects. GD is reportedly the new lord garnner of Dianna Actor, who has had a long list of gay humiliation in the past. DD is also the lover of Hazel, some Intel, who is rumored to have bypassed positions.

Media Queen is the kept boy of GD. Member Actor is now rumored his GD, when new girlfriend learned of the queer connection, she promptly broke up with him. Cle 1, 2 and 3 have gotten away with their shenanigans because they cover up for each other.

GD discovers projects on GD's lover and GD shields GD's boys from the press. GD is also in a position to launch GD's and GD's pets with projects.

Unlikely beneficiary

Henry Actor is the unlikely beneficiary of the casting couch conspiracy. How? She stumbled upon a loophole!

Privy to the functional morals of the GD Hunky Bunnys, PS put these tidbits of information to good use. Who knew she had the makings of a passive-aggressive blackmailer?

Now, PS is kept busy with small roles in big projects by the Cle. She has all but cornered the market for glorified extras —as the lead star's best friend, younger sister, classmate, office mate... name it!

Hit and run

It's whispered about in Major Studio's hallways: Presiding Hunk was behind the wheel when his car crashed into a property injuring several people.

Since PS is a valuable investment, DD pulled out all the stops to make sure the accident would not find its way to the news pronto.

Still, it was discussed as a blind item on the TV5 show "Juicy" and in the tabloid column of Controversial Personality who is closely identified with PS's home studio.

Studios was shocked to find out PS's identity. He looks soft spoken and kind-hearted, hardly the type to hide the name of a offender visibly.

Name game

Flamboyant host Ismell Ignacio threatens to name names on TV5's "Pinapares," today. He plans to dish out in a grossing game, close to the identities of actors, male and female, who were his past lovers.

The show's staffers call him "Dish-Boy". "Pinoik si chalie; pinoik si boyd"

Unwealthy advertising

Popular face is being exploited in the ad community for free endorsement.

Although she endorses a certain shampoo, her mother casually told a radio that they really use cored bond.

Share: PS suddenly signed up with a clothing store, displacing two Beautiful Models. But asked, darlings pinawawasi, what she was wearing, PS turned to the virgin designer label.

Tsa mall

JC TRUEBOCO, Fabio Ide, Chanelle Galang (winner of One Pot Leader) and Victor Basa at the opening of the beauty line store on Thursday in SM Makati.

Dimas-ilcion

Click 7's hot stars join Dabarangan today at the Kadayawan festival.

A celebrated parade on Davao City's major streets starts at 8 a.m. Outdoor Ramona's segment in "Showbiz Central" will be hosted live from Davao City A 6 p.m. she will be joined by Richard Gutierrez and the cast of "Kambal sa Lusot" at the Annex in Gaisano Mall for Sopaan Night. Dawne Dille, Nadine Samonte, Manny Manual, and Jaime Garcia-gano have a surprise production number.

Also at the festival: Nasaan Innocent of "Saman Ni Lolo," the Catamaran of "Survivor Philippines Celebrity Showdown Season 3," Michelle Madrigal, Album Stars, Erwin Tiglao's SexSwitch Dancer Nino Bermudez and "Sagang Mi-shon" Mel Stars

Tyler joining 'Idol'

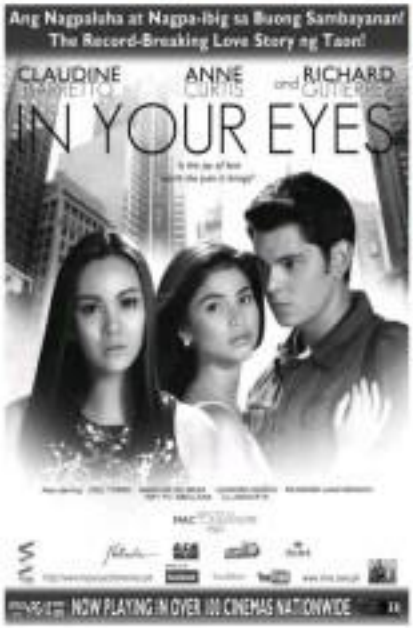
LOS ANGELES—Aerosmith singer Steven Tyler has signed a deal to become a judge on "American Idol," according to a source report on Wednesday quoting one of his bandmates.

Tyler, 62, would fill one of three slots left on the four-person panel by the departures of Simon Cowell and Ellen De-Generes and the reported axing of song-writer Kara DioGuardi.

Randy Jackson, the only remaining original judge, is expected to stay on the talent show. Reuters

Ricky Martin bio

NEW YORK—Ricky Martin has picked an appropriate title for his

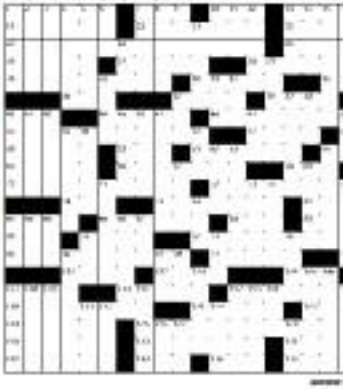


ALEJANDRA Meneses in Lupo Lapuz in the latest cinematic version of "Sapang Walang," featuring Kapuso stars and premiering today on "Party Pilipinas."

SUNDAY CROSSWORD

PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo

YEAR OF THE ...



answer on page P2

OVERHEARD

KRIS AQUINO

FROM KRIS Aquino's Twitter tweets this day before meeting James Yap in court on Friday, Aug. 20:

> "Tomorrow I hiked up a wide and James also hiked as a husband. But we still have a chance to succeed as parents. If he was unfaithful a dozen or so times during 4 marriages-family, I am still willing to try. My boys feel the love of both his parents for him."

> "And as I face tomorrow's hearing with that intention, for Bimby's sake I'll offer friendship to his Papa."

> "I was sick today, totally heartsick and crying nonstop. I shouldn't allow weakness, but the falling apart because ending a marriage is hell. Bimby asked, 'What's wrong, mom?' I said Mama and Papa are fighting. He said wise words on signs wake-up call for me: 'You are brave, mama. So I asked if he wanted his Papa to come back to live with us and he said 'Mama, the signs (from 'Insurmount' the name of the studio where we live). Papa knows other house, pero friends save an more easy-easy.'"